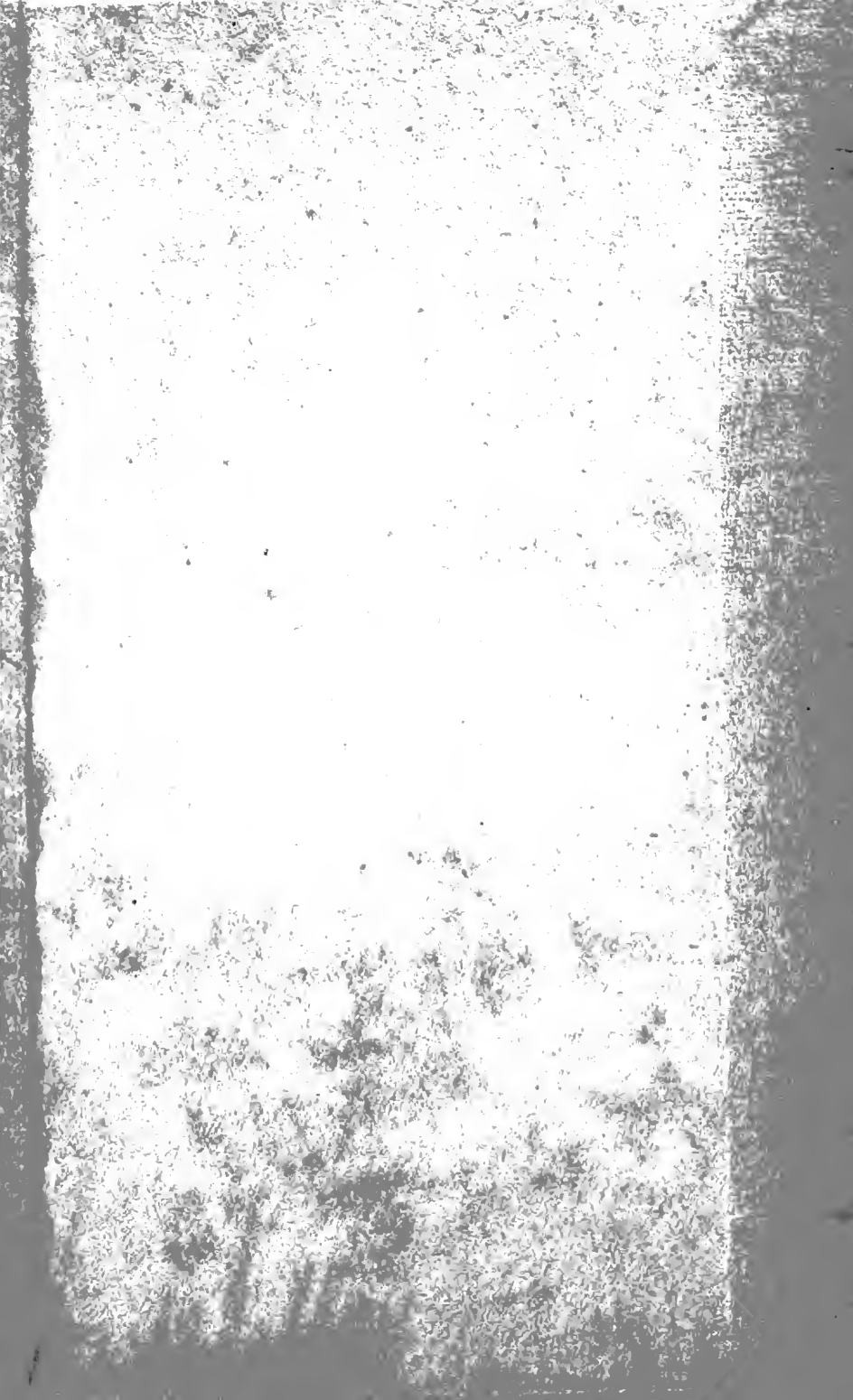


# BIG GAME SHOOTING

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## BIG GAME SHOOTING.







THE KING OF BEASTS.

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# BIG GAME SHOOTING

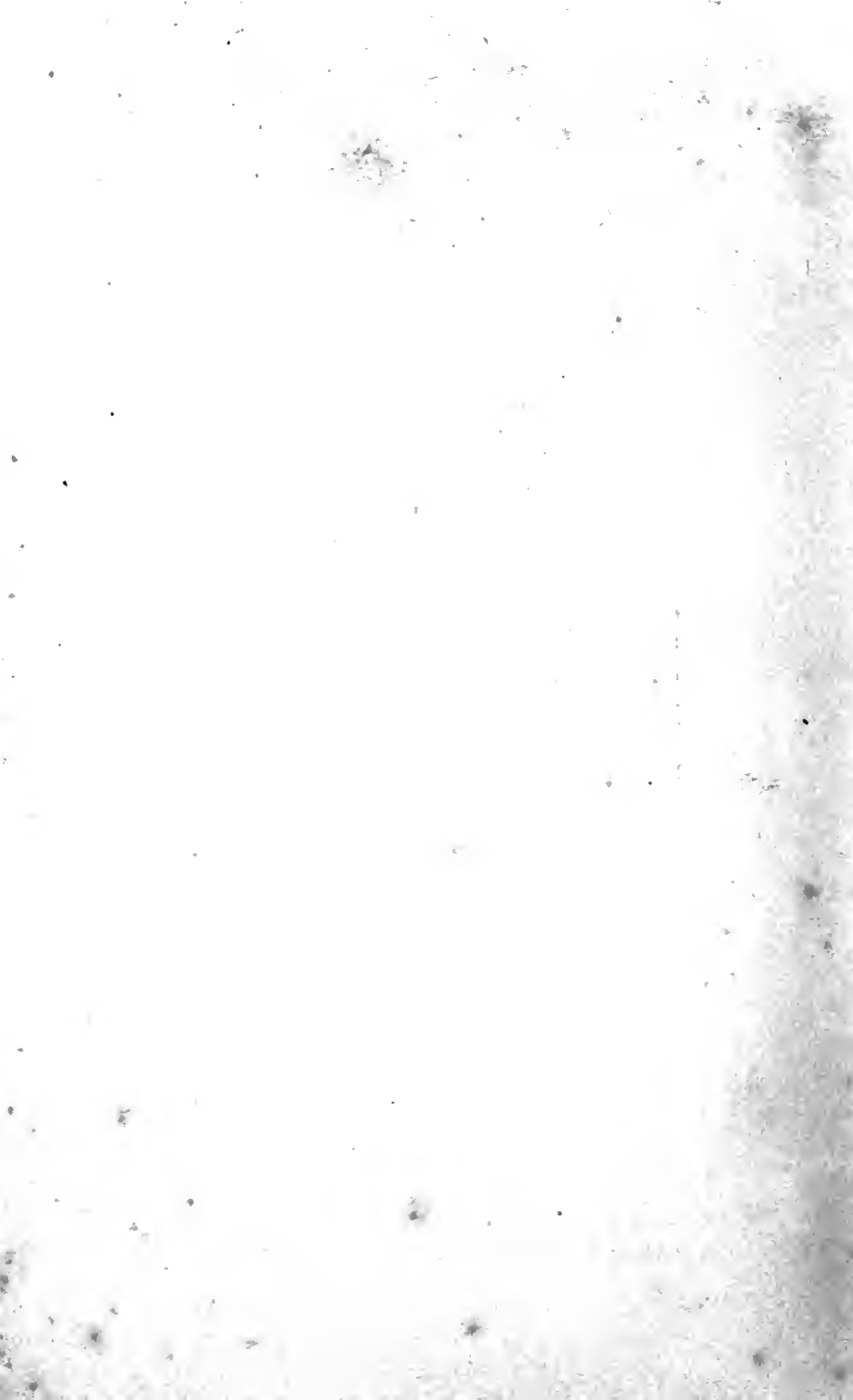
EDITED BY

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## VOLUME II

### PART I



PART I  
AFRICAN BIG GAME









A FINE LIONESS.



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

By H. A. BRYDEN

ONE sometimes hears the expression, among people who are not very certain of their facts, "Oh! African shooting is getting played out." There is, of course, some element of truth in the remark, but the statement is, speaking generally, inaccurate and untrue. There are still large areas of country in the African continent where the white man's face is almost unknown, and the report of his rifle unheard. Even within the last year or two regions between Abyssinia and the Nile, abounding in many kinds of great game, have for the first time been opened up

by British explorers. The okapi, that strange survival of an infinitely far-distant epoch, has only lately been brought to light in the Congo forest regions, and in a recent journey through East Africa, Abyssinia, and Somaliland, Herr Neumann, a German scientist, has discovered no less than seven new antelopes. Two or three new species of zebra, and a perfectly new form of giraffe, have been brought to light within the last dozen years. In East Central, West, and Central Africa there are immense stretches of country which, for many years to come, will yield good sport to the hunter. Even in South Africa, where for 250 years the Boer has educated himself to the use of smooth-bore and rifle at the expense of the most wonderful fauna in the world, the game is by no means yet shot out, and in many parts of the interior—in Rhodesia, Khama's country, Ngamiland, and South-East Africa—good shooting is still to be obtained. It is true that great ravages have been made among the game of Africa since the era of the percussion gun and, still more recently, of the breech-loading rifle. The waste of life on the Karroos of Cape Colony, the plains of the Orange Free State, and the high veldt of the Transvaal has been almost incredible. It is a melancholy thing to reflect that upon these plains, where, forty or fifty years ago, there were depastured hundreds of thousands of many species of wild game, so that the face of the country was darkened by their innumerable legions, but a few thousands of springbok and blesbok are now to be found. The advances of colonisation are,

after all, responsible for this change. It was not to be expected that farmers, whether Dutch or British, who wished to make a living and add to their wealth by pastoral pursuits, agriculture, wine-farming, and fruit-growing, would maintain, at the expense of their flocks and herds and crops, the marvellous fauna of the country in its virgin state. The settlers required the land, and the game had perforce to go. Yet even now, in spite of the slaughter of the past hundred years, there is still fair shooting on the minor scale to be found in South Africa. Even south of the Orange River, in the arid, desert region of the north-west of Cape Colony, the fecund springbok is to be found in hundreds of thousands. Here the periodical Trek-Bokken, or migration, of these beautiful antelopes, is to be observed, and thousands of buck are shot annually by the primitive Trek-Boers inhabiting that thinly settled region.

Preservation has done something for Cape Colony, and mountain zebra, the koodoo, gemsbok, hartebeest, buffalo, and wild elephant are still to be found there ; while small antelopes of various species are abundant in many places. If in long-settled portions of South Africa, where the Boers have been at work since 1652, some amount of sport is still to be found, the reader will not be surprised to learn that in savage Africa, in those vast regions of the Dark Continent, as yet untouched by civilisation, great game of all kinds is abundant. Africa, it may be easily predicted, will not be shot out for many a long year to come. In some countries a timely preservation is

being enforced, the wasteful gunner is being warned off, or penalised by stringent game laws, and the native hunter, who works more harm than all the rest of the sportsmen put together, is being occasionally looked after. The fair sportsman, who is not ambitious to make a holocaust of game, can still obtain first-rate shooting in various parts of Africa among many kinds of game, from the elephant, the rhinoceros, the lion, and the buffalo, down to the tiniest antelope, if he knows where to go and can shoot reasonably well. He will, of course, have to travel further and to pay more for his sport than he used to do. Game licenses, ranging from £10 to £50, and even more, are now payable in many places, and the old and good days of South African shooting, when a man had but to fit out a waggon for three or four months and return loaded up with trophies, are now fast vanishing. South Africa was, of course, the hunter's paradise; the country was extraordinarily healthy, the game was everywhere, and horses could always be used. In most other parts of the African continent the sportsman has to seek his game on foot, the heat is infinitely trying, and fever, dysentery, and other troubles are constantly sapping at a man's vitality. In Somaliland, it is true, ponies can be obtained and employed, and now and again in Portuguese South-West Africa, where good shooting is to be had, a horse can be procured and kept alive. But wherever he may trek, the wanderer in search of sport has to bear in mind the fact that, at the present day, to be a suc-



FISH FOR THE "BOYS."



SOMALILAND HUNTER.



cessful hunter of big game, a man must be prepared to rough it, to put up with hard and laborious days in an exhausting climate, to cut himself off from all luxuries, and to sacrifice his food, his comfort, and his convenience to the one object of attaining sport. Even in the best days of South African shooting a man had to be a keen sportsman, a good rider, of tough constitution, and of active habit, to stand the wear and tear of a hunter's life. The sportsman has now, as the writer can testify, to work far harder than of old to attain his object and bag his game.

Big-game hunting in Africa, as elsewhere, is a fine education. It necessitates a clean, hard, and self-denying life. It renders a man strong, self-reliant, quick, and courageous. It toughens the nerves and improves the constitution, and the sportsman returns from the hunting veldt a far better and more capable being than before he entered it. Notwithstanding the wonderful improvements effected in firearms, even within the last few years, it may still be said with truth that the hunter who follows the elephant, the buffalo, the lion, the leopard, and the rhinoceros takes his life in his hand. His quarry is, if nerve, eye, or judgment be wanting, as likely to kill him as not. Many a good man has fallen, and is likely yet to fall, in such encounters. One can recall, even within recent years, the deaths of such men as the Hon. Guy Dawnay, Mr. F. L. James, Mr. Ingram, Mr. Sandbach, and others who have forfeited their lives in the pursuit of dangerous game.

The pursuit of big game and nothing else has rendered the Boers what they have proved themselves in the late war, the most dangerous and most *rusé* fighting men with whom the British soldier has ever yet had to measure himself. It is true that now and again big-game shooting has been overdone, and the gunner, carried away by his enthusiasm for the chase, has here and there shot recklessly, and it may be wastefully. But, as a rule, the sportsman proper, as distinguished from the mere hide hunter and professional slayer of game, shoots in a husband-like manner, and is nowadays content with slaying dangerous carnivora, and securing only prime trophies and picked specimens.

Happily for our race, there are many hundreds, one may say thousands, of Britons who, in search of that sport and wild life which have for them such an abounding fascination, are prepared to give up many things that we class to-day, not as luxuries merely, but as necessities of life ; who will cheerfully abandon comforts, and venture health—nay, even life itself—in the attainment of the trophies they seek. To these Africa has yet much to offer, and there the finest and most enthralling sport in the world is still to be obtained. In the following pages will be found indicated, as concisely as possible, the great game to be found in various parts of the continent, their habits, the methods of hunting them, and the countries and localities in which they are found, together with such information as to the battery, outfit, and other details as may be of use and interest

to the sportsman meditating an expedition into the homes and haunts of the nobler of the African fauna.

#### THE BATTERY, OUTFIT, EQUIPMENT, ETC.

Since the recent introduction of rifles of comparatively small bore, which, using smokeless powder, are capable of delivering an impact of terrific force, the heavy large-bore rifles of twenty or even ten years ago are now not absolutely necessary. For any part of Africa the following battery would at the present time be amply sufficient :—

A .303 Lee-Enfield (or .256 Mannlicher) sporting rifle, carefully sighted.

A .450 (or .400) double rifle, burning 70 grains of cordite powder and firing a bullet weighing 480 grains. For the .400, 55 grains cordite and 400 grain bullet.

A double .8-bore Paradox gun.

A .12-bore double-barrel shot-gun, the left barrel slightly choked.

A Rook rifle or .44 Marlin for small antelope, large bustard, wild geese, etc.

With the .303 or .256 all kinds of fine shooting at medium-sized game at long ranges can be made. Telescope sights are now often employed, and for ibex and other hill shooting, and even springbuck and gazelle stalking on the plains at long ranges, they are very useful. The .303 is so powerful a weapon that it is now often used even for the

pursuit of heavy game, and elephants and rhinoceros have in recent years frequently been killed with it.

For heavy game, however, the .450 or .400 may be more confidently recommended, as dealing a more smashing blow with a heavier bullet. With this weapon, using smokeless powder, the heaviest and most dangerous game in the world may now be pursued with confidence.

The double .8-bore Paradox (or a gun or similar type—all gun-makers build such a weapon) is always a most useful firearm to have in reserve, to be carried by one's gun-bearer in case of emergency. In thick bush, where a charge from heavy or dangerous game may be expected at close quarters, and quick shooting is essential, this is a first-rate weapon, dealing, as it does, a smashing blow and stopping or turning any kind of game.

The shot-gun is always a necessary adjunct for shooting game birds or wild fowl and providing a pleasant change of dietary, when an incessant course of big-game meat threatens to become a weariness to the system.

In addition to these weapons, common sporting or military Martini-Henry rifles (or Snider) for one's followers and native hunters may be necessary. In East Africa and Somaliland, where a large caravan is made up and armed followers are necessary, the men are usually equipped with Snider rifles.

*Outfit, etc., South Africa.*—Since the war in South Africa, prices of all kinds have been greatly upset, and it will be some years before things have settled down again

to normal conditions. Rinderpest, too, has played havoc with cattle, and the cost of ox-waggon transport is much increased. Horses, which are always necessary, cost from £15 to £25 apiece—probably from £20 to £30 will now be nearer the mark. A salted horse (*i.e.*, one immune against horse-sickness) is worth from £60 to £80 in normal times. For a hunting trip of four to six months three horses are necessary for each sportsman. If the trip is made in the dry winter season—May to October—salted horses are not absolute necessities.

A good second-hand hunting waggon can be procured for from £80 to £100. Trek-oxen are worth from £12 to £15 apiece, in place of the £6, 10s. per head of a few years since. Sixteen to eighteen oxen make up the span. Wages are usually £2, 10s. per month for the driver; cook, £2, 10s.; horse boys, 10s. to £1; leaders (or foreloupers), 10s. to £1. In addition to these wages, native servants are found in food, which consists, for the most part, of mealie meal, with meat when in the game veldt. Cooks and drivers are allowed coffee and sugar. Tea, coffee, sugar, tinned milk, Boer meal (for making bread), mealie meal, plenty of tinned stores—fruits, jams, vegetables, etc.—as well as mealies for the shooting ponies, should be taken.<sup>1</sup> A Cape waggon has plenty of storage room. Dried

<sup>1</sup> When shooting in South Africa, where horses are used, mealies are essential. Hunting means hard work for one's horse-flesh, and the nags quickly run down in condition unless well fed. Where mealies are unprocurable Kaffir corn (a species of millet), usually obtainable at native villages, is an excellent substitute.

onions should never be omitted. Bacon is always welcome. A useful list of all articles necessary for a South African hunting trip may be found in the last chapter of the writer's *Gun and Camera in Southern Africa* (Stanford). All stores may be procured at Mafeking, Buluwayo, Palachwe (Khama's country), and Johannesburg, and, except for battery and personal outfit, the sportsman will find it quite unnecessary to encumber himself with stores and so forth until reaching these places. If, however, he meditates a shooting trip from Benguela or Mossamedes, in Portuguese West Africa, he may be advised to carry stores with him. At Walfish Bay, German South-West Africa, stores, equipment, waggons, oxen, and horses can generally be procured. At Mossamedes, waggons and oxen and assistance can be hired from the Trek-Boers settled in that region. It is a mistake to use a heavy military saddle for hunting purposes. The lighter the saddle, consistently with strength, the better. Plenty of dees, for fastening on saddle-bags, water-bottle, field-glasses, and so forth, should be affixed.

A small case of medicines, preferably as much as possible in tabloid form (Burroughs Wellcome & Co.) should not be forgotten.

As to personal gear, flannel shirts, breeches of velvet cord, khaki, or gabardine (an excellent thorn-resister), stout pig-skin gaiters, and strong brown lace-up boots are necessities of existence. Some men prefer field-boots to gaiters. In wet weather they certainly have advantages. Spurs should not be too

long in the neck, as one is constantly jumping on and off one's pony, often in a desperate hurry. In Africa, south of the Zambesi, the broad-brimmed felt hat is far the most suitable head-gear. When hunting on horseback, this should be fastened to the wearer by a piece of cord or *riempje*. In tropical Africa pith helmets, or topis, are usually worn. Personally, I have a strong antipathy to the helmet; it is a poor form of head-gear for shooting in.

When hunting in thick bush, especially in pursuit of giraffe, a strong cord or gabardine coat should be put on; this can be carried strapped on the saddle-bow.

Field-glasses, a stalking glass, and a good, felt-covered, vulcanite water-bottle—Silver and Co.'s (of Cornhill) pattern is the best I know—are indispensable.

A pointer is very useful—nay, indispensable—for finding game birds, and various mongrels are usually taken as waggon dogs, camp guards, and for hunting up wild carnivora.

Although the initial cost of a South African outfit is considerable, with ordinary good fortune and good management much of it can be got back on the return to civilisation. Horses, waggon, guns, and stores all fetch good prices up-country. On the last expedition I made, the actual cost of the trip resolved itself practically into personal outfit, the necessary stores, hire of men, and the loss of one pony and an ox or two.

*East and Central Africa.*—In these countries neither waggons nor horses are employed; the

sportsman has to fit out an extensive caravan, and a considerable number of native followers are necessary. The cost of a caravan of say sixty carriers will average in wages alone probably from £75 to £80 per month.<sup>1</sup> In addition to this, fire-arms and ammunition for the men, and the sportsman's own outfit, stores, arms, and equipment have to be provided. Since the Uganda Railway has been built, the expenses of the long march from the coast have been much reduced, and the sportsman can get to his ground far more quickly. It is always to be remembered that the restrictions on shooting big game in British East Africa and German East Africa are now very severe, and the easy and rather wasteful shooting of a few years since is now a thing of the past. Before the gunner makes plans for sport in this part of Africa, he may well pause to consider whether the game is worth the candle. Mr. A. H. Neumann and other well-known sportsmen apparently think not.

In Somaliland and Abyssinia caravans have to be organised very much as in British East Africa. In Somaliland camels are used for crossing the waterless *Haud*, and ponies can be procured. The cost of Somali hunting and outfit is very clearly and fully set forth in Major H. G. C. Swayne's *Seventeen Trips through Somaliland* (Rowland Ward, 1900). For Abyssinia, hitherto almost a sealed book to

<sup>1</sup> Major Powell-Cotton, in his recent book, *Through Unknown Africa*, puts the full cost of an expedition at £100 a month. If the sportsman confines himself to short trips from the Uganda Railway he could obtain fair shooting for a good deal less.





SOMALILAND HORSEMEN.



THE DONKEY ACCOMPANIES THE START.

THE END

English sportsmen, Major Powell-Cotton's admirable and recent work, *A Sporting Trip through Abyssinia* (Rowland Ward, 1902), should be carefully studied. The general cost and the various items of outfit, carriers, shikaris, etc., are all most carefully dealt with.

Any one hunting in Africa at the present time must bear in mind that the conditions and prospects of sport with big game have almost totally altered within the last half-dozen years. It is impossible to follow in a work of this kind all the innumerable enactments for the protection of big game that have been made recently by our own and other governments. These enactments are changing from year to year, and even from month to month, and it requires a complete volume to keep pace with them. If the gunner desires to shoot in a particular country, he should satisfy himself by careful inquiry in the right quarters in what way the game is protected, what are the shooting licenses, and how many head of game he may shoot.

British East Africa and German East Africa may now be said to be almost closed to European hunters. In the first place a game license of £50 (for East Africa and Uganda) is demanded, only a certain number of antelopes may be shot, and elephants, rhinoceros, and other species of game are protected.<sup>1</sup> In the Sudan the license costs £50, and the sportsman's bag is severely limited. Large reserves are closed to travellers.

<sup>1</sup> Two bull elephants and two rhinoceros may be shot.

In German East Africa a sportsman's license costs 500 rupees; certain animals and districts are protected. 100 rupees are charged for the first elephant shot, and 250 rupees for every subsequent elephant bagged. For rhinoceros 50 and 150 rupees are similarly charged.

In Somaliland the game license is 500 rupees; in British Central Africa, £25, the bag being also very carefully restricted. If native shooting were prohibited at the same time, white hunters would have less cause for complaint; but it is the fact that game continues to be daily and hourly shot by the black man in many parts of Africa without mercy and without discrimination. No policing, in so vast a country, can prevent it.

In Portuguese East Africa the license for shooting big game is £20.

In the Congo Free State the license to carry a gun and shoot game, other than elephants, costs 20 francs. For elephant hunting the license is 500 francs. In French Congoland there appear to be no regulations concerning hunting; but in the Conventional Basin arms pay an entrance tax of 10 per cent. In the Non-Conventional Basin arms pay 20 francs each, but cartridges are forbidden.

In South Africa, hunting parties, shooting in the Bechuanaland Protectorate (Khama's country, etc.), are required to pay a license of £75, in addition to a fee of £25 to the chiefs in whose country they may be shooting. In Rhodesia the game license costs £25, and many animals are protected as "royal" game.

A part of Africa which has been almost entirely neglected by English hunters is the Gambia hinterland, where, undoubtedly, a good deal of game is to be found. Here, many years ago, was procured the magnificent Derbian or Senegambian eland (*Taurotragus derbianus*), which carries horns considerably exceeding in size those from any other region of Africa. A sporting trip to the Gambia would, I believe, well repay the hunter-naturalist.

Probably as good shooting as can be found in almost any part of Africa is now to be obtained in the Portuguese province of Angola, West Africa—in Benguela, Mossamedes, etc. Here the sportsman can obtain fair sport without being perpetually worried by vexatious restrictions. No one wishes to see the game of Africa protected from extinction more ardently than the writer. But beyond all question, it is not the British gunner who shoots nowadays who is the culprit in this respect. As a rule, the average Briton shoots carefully and in a husband-like manner, and is desirous mainly to secure a few good trophies and enough meat for his camp during a short period. The man who is exterminating the game of Africa is the African himself, who, armed with a cheap gun, is dealing destruction daily and hourly, for ever creeping about the bush, and, with endless patience, manœuvring until he can gain a certain shot.

[It is very noticeable that the complaint which is made here by Mr. Bryden is precisely the complaint that we hear from very many other of our British

possessions with regard to the extinction of the indigenous large fauna. It is especially frequent from that latest district that has been opened up for the operations of the British big-game shooter—Alaska, where the Indians and others who kill the game for sale are the chief offenders.—ED.]





## CHAPTER II

### THE FLESH-EATERS

By H. A. BRYDEN

#### THE LION

LIONS are still to be found in very many parts of Africa, from Abyssinia and the confines of Algeria to the Transvaal Colony. In 1899, just before the Boer War broke out, one of these animals was killed at Springs, within a dozen miles of Johannesburg, and some numbers are still to be heard of in the north-east and east of the colony. A few still linger in British Bechuanaland; their range may be said to extend even farther south. In 1893, for instance,

a pair of lions followed and attacked some oxen while drinking in the Orange River, near Upington, on the northern bank ; the lion was killed ; the lioness, after being wounded, made her escape.

There is but one species of lion to be found in Africa and Asia. These animals may and do vary considerably in coloration, character, and even in size, but the lion of South Africa, or indeed of any part of the Dark Continent, is specifically identical with the lion of Mesopotamia and Persia and the lion of the Gir, in Kathiawar, the last stronghold of this beast in India. Formerly it was thought otherwise by some people. The old-fashioned hunting Boers, for instance, used to classify these animals as black-maned and yellow-maned lions, and stoutly maintained that the species were distinct. The Boers, however, never were good as scientific naturalists, however expert they were and still are with the rifle ; and the fact that a lioness will produce from the same litter of cubs a yellow-maned and a black-maned lion is well ascertained. Lions, in fact, vary constantly, in size and coloration, all over Africa, the body hue ranging from silvery grey to yellow and a dull tawny. The coat of the wild lion is much shorter and closer than that of the beast kept in captivity, and the splendid mane of the menagerie lion is usually found greatly lacking in the veldt-bred specimen. Still, now and again, lions possessing really good manes are killed in the wild state. Probably the finest lions, for size, mane, and coat ever found in Africa were those that used to



infest the Orange Free State in the days—some fifty or sixty years ago—when game was inordinately plentiful, and the Boers were settling in their new country. Somaliland lions are, as a rule, smaller than those found in other parts of Africa. A good big lion will stand as much as three feet six or three feet eight inches at the shoulder, and will weigh not far short of five hundred pounds. His strength is, of course, enormous, and he can master and pull down practically every animal in Africa, except the rhinoceros and elephant—animals with which he seems carefully to avoid quarrelling. C. J. Andersson certainly records an instance where a black rhinoceros, severely wounded by him, had been attacked and even mauled by a brace of lions, which, no doubt attracted by the scent of blood, had tried conclusions with that gigantic beast. The rhinoceros, however, in spite of its wounded condition, had managed to beat them off, only itself to fall on the following morning to the rifle of the human hunter. Buffaloes, especially full-grown males, are creatures of such tremendous strength and weight that a pair of lions or more are probably often required to conquer them and pull them down. Oswell and Vardon, two of the greatest of English hunters, one day, shooting along the Limpopo, were witnesses of an extraordinary combat between an old buffalo bull and three lions. The bull had been wounded by Vardon, and the two hunters presently came upon it while waging a most gallant but unequal fight against three big male lions, which, with teeth and

claws and the whole exercise of their enormous strength, were tearing at it and trying to pull it down. Two of the lions were shot dead by the hunters as they hung on to the dying buffalo, the third was wounded but escaped. Buffaloes, although much preyed upon by lions, defend themselves—plucky beasts that they are—most gallantly whenever they get a fair chance, and many a lion must have been gored to death by them. A troop of cow buffaloes have been known to keep at bay for a whole night several lions bent on attacking their calves, and to have successfully repelled all their attacks.

Lions kill their prey in various ways—either by a bite or bites in the throat, tearing the jugular vein and causing strangulation, or by biting at the back of the neck just behind the ears. Sometimes the prey is killed by the lion springing on to the shoulders of the animal it attacks, and wrenching the head round with one of the fore-paws; the neck of the unfortunate beast is thus broken, either by the terrific wrench given by the lion, or by falling upon its head at the same moment, or by a combination of both disasters. Having slain its quarry, the lion usually tears out the entrails, and, gathering them into a heap, covers them with soil, very much as a dog buries a bone for future use. Before doing this it will usually eat forthwith such tit-bits as the liver, heart, lungs, and kidneys; sometimes, however, the beast will devour the entrails or great parts of them at once. Usually the brute claws open the lower



WATCHING A DEAD LION.



SIIKARIS AND LION.

part of the stomach, and begins operations there, but at other times it begins on the soft meat between the legs, about the anus and hind-quarters. The appetite of a hungry lion is enormous ; the animal gulps down huge quantities of meat, and will dispose of a good-sized antelope or great part of a zebra, of which it is extremely fond, in a night. Hendrik, a Hottentot driver of Gordon-Cumming, was seized by a lion one dark night, as he lay by the camp fire, and carried off and practically devoured within fifty yards of the hunter's encampment. Next morning, when Cumming went out to look for the remains of the poor fellow, he found but a single leg, bitten off below the knee, with fragments of the Hottentot's old pea-coat. Cumming took his revenge on the brute, and shot the man-eater that same afternoon.

As a rule, lions being essentially nocturnal animals, are seldom encountered in the daytime. In countries where they have not been much disturbed, however, and have not yet learned to dread human beings and to understand fire-arms, they may be more often seen in broad daylight. Moffat, during his early travels in what is now British Bechuanaland, saw during a single day no less than nine different troops of these carnivora. And Cornwallis Harris, during his expedition through the countries now known as the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, seems to have constantly met with these animals during the daytime, sometimes within a few score yards of his camp. In Mashonaland, when the British South Africa Company's Pioneers entered the country in 1890,

lions, which had been up to that time very little disturbed, were extraordinarily bold and daring, and many colonists and post-riders had narrow escapes from them. A friend and fellow-sportsman of the writer, riding home to camp one day with a steinbok slung behind his saddle, was chased in the most determined manner by a lion in open daylight.

In 1898 Mr. R. T. Coryndon, a well-known hunter of big game, had a very narrow escape in broad daylight in the Barotse country (Lewanika's territory, Upper Zambesi Valley), where he is resident. "I saw three lions," he says, in a letter to Mr. Herbert Ward, "one morning in the Batoka plateau, and as there was some cover behind me, and, of course, I wanted to shoot all three of them, I wanted to open the ball as far from cover as possible. They were on a beautiful open country, and I was riding a fine, great grey horse. I put in spurs and galloped at them, when a lioness, which I had not seen before, jumped from behind a bush at me. I was going very fast, and the horse shied violently, so she landed on his quarters and too far back to scrape me off. We all went down together, and I jumped up, snatched my rifle, and, as she turned away—for she was surprised and cowed at missing her spring—I shot her at seven paces. The horse had a couple of ridiculously small scratches, and I had my left foot torn a little by her tooth, and a claw mark on my right foot—a wonderfully narrow escape. She got away, however, after all."

As a general rule, however, it may be taken that

lions—even a troop of lions—if encountered in daytime, will almost invariably betake themselves pretty hastily from the neighbourhood of human beings. Many a starving Bushman, for instance, gets his dinner by driving off the beast from its kill and helping himself to the carcase.

Lions consort usually in small family parties, numbering from four or five to as many as ten or twelve. As the young males grow to maturity, they quit the troop, or are driven from it by the older and strong male, and form alliances of their own. At times a pair of males may be found in company, sometimes a single lion or lioness alone. These single beasts are more often than not old and cunning brutes, which, becoming less active than of yore, begin to hang about kraals and villages, kill cattle and goats, and finally attain a dreaded notoriety as man-eaters. Man-eating lions, by the way, have caused no little havoc during the building of two African lines of railway within the last few years. During the construction of the Uganda Railway two of these animals established themselves on the line near the Tsavo River, and killed between twenty and thirty of the coolies employed in the building of the railway. They created a perfect terror, and something had to be done. One of the engineers, Mr. J. H. Patterson, tackled the business, and at the risk of his own life destroyed both the man-eaters. On another part of the Uganda Railway an Englishman was actually pulled out of a railway carriage and devoured. An almost similar state of

terror was established by man-eating lions on the Beira-Salisbury Railway during the middle 'nineties. Here, too, many lives—more than thirty—were lost among the native labourers.

On dark stormy nights lions are more to be feared than at any other time. If hungry, they will on such a night dare almost anything, and neither fires nor fire-arms will keep them off. In the Pungwe River country, east of Mashonaland, lions were and still are singularly bold and fearless of human beings. Mr. Selous once spent one of the most exciting nights of his existence in this country, with the object of shooting a lion or lions which had been troubling the vicinity. One of these animals had killed and devoured a man here a short time previously. Sheltering himself and his shooting comrade beneath a hut or screen of thorns supported by poles, Selous took up his station at dusk. Near them lay the carcase of a dead ox. By seven o'clock lions were already about them. Nor, in spite of the fact that the hunter killed dead two of their number and wounded another, did they quit the place, prowling round the screen, and occasionally even trying to force their way in, and devouring the dead ox within 6 feet of the two white men. It was a sufficiently exciting experience ; and if Selous had not shot and mortally wounded one of the brutes as it attempted to force its way into the light and precarious screen of thorns, anything might have happened.

Lions are hunted in various ways. The Boers more usually prefer to tackle them in a body,



several men with rifles assisting in the business, and a volley being fired when the animal is encountered. Very few South-African Dutch, in spite of their undoubted qualifications as hunters and fine shots, care to tackle the lion single-handed, after the manner of Oswell, Vardon, Gordon-Cumming, Baldwin, Selous, and many another sportsman of British blood. Hunting the lion on foot is, in spite of the attempts that have been made at various times to impeach the courage of this animal, one of the most dangerous pastimes in the world, and only the man who is assured alike of his shooting capacity and his nerve may be advised to attempt it. With a pack of mongrel dogs, which are often used in South Africa, the danger is much lessened, as the attention of the lion is distracted, and the sportsman has a much better chance of a steady shot. In South Africa, as has been remarked, horses are commonly used for all kinds of hunting, right away to the Zambesi. But the sportsman seldom shoots from his horse, unless perhaps when running giraffe or eland or close up to a big target, such as an elephant. The shot is more likely to be accurate when on foot, and in nearly all cases the hunter dismounts to take his aim. For a short distance, it should be remembered, a lion will run as fast as a horse can gallop, and even mounted men have had many a narrow escape from these beasts. Mr. W. C. Baldwin, the last of the great English hunters of the 'fifties, who died only last year, was once thus chased by a lion in the northern part of Khama's (then

Sicomey's) country. As the brute made one lightning rush at him, and his nag (a very good one) was going at full speed, Baldwin, looking back over his shoulder and bending low over his horse's neck, saw him coming. He gave a violent pull at the bridle on the near side, a fierce dig with his off-spur, and just saved himself. The lion bounded up, grazed Baldwin's right shoulder, and all but unshipped him, but just missed its mark. Baldwin pulled himself up by his stirrup leather, presently checked his horse, and finally settled his attacker in two shots, after a sufficiently trying experience.

When hunting with horses in lion country, two good fires ought to be kept going, and the horses tied up to the wheels on the inner side of the waggons. Lions have a particular fancy for horses, as they have for zebras, and with his nags dead or disabled, the hunter finds himself bereft of the most valuable part of his equipment. Yet lions will, like human beings, on occasion miss valuable opportunities and behave in just the contrary way to what one might expect of them. I once rode on in front of the waggons from a water in the Northern Kalahari to the Botletli river, Ngamiland. There were three of us—Dove, my shooting companion, and a native "boy" and myself, and we each rode and led a horse. Having accomplished 65 miles of burning and waterless country in a night and day, we were dead tired, and finding no wood or dung for a fire, lay down and slept with our horses tied to a tree close to us. Next morning we found the

spoor of a lion within fifty yards of us. This beast had already killed one man, and was then attacking the cattle of a village near at hand. Why it neglected to attack our six horses or ourselves that dark moonless night, as we lay without the protection of a fire, I have never been able to discover. This same animal killed an ox a night or two after, and was subsequently slain by the people of the Bakarutse village near where we camped.

In Central and most other portions of Africa the lion must of necessity be sought and attacked on foot. In Somaliland ponies or camels can be employed, and much time and fatigue saved. A favourite method of shooting in this country is to sit up by a bait—a live goat or donkey—at night, sheltered by a zariba of thorns.

Lions, like human beings, vary in courage, and occasionally even a wounded lion will turn tail and bolt ignominiously. As a general rule, however, it may be said that a lion, wounded or unwounded, is a very "kittle" beast to meddle with. Few of these animals will submit to be followed up without attempting to retaliate. Mr. Selous once had a singular adventure with two lions on an open plain in the Mababi Veldt, Ngamiland. He had expended all his cartridges, and his comrade's rifle had been rendered for the time useless by the foresight being knocked off. They encountered two male lions on the middle of this wide flat, and tried with four remaining cartridges to shoot one of the brutes with the damaged rifle. One of the lions, a black-maned

one, had previously savagely resented Selous' approach by chasing him hard as he drew near, so that, mounted as he was, he had some trouble to escape. The four shots, as might have been expected from a sightless rifle, went wide of the mark, and the black-maned lion repeatedly and savagely chased its assailants in the process. Finally, the two lions remained absolutely masters of the situation, and the hunters retired discomfited.

When the lion means to make his charge he usually elevates his tail stiffly in the air, and jerks it rapidly once or twice from side to side. It is then time to be ready with the rifle. Even when severely wounded the beast will occasionally make good his charge, and is never actually done with till dead or absolutely disabled. Major H. G. C. Swayne, author of *Seventeen Trips through Somaliland*, a sportsman of great experience, was thus charged by a lioness which had been wounded by his brother. The brute knocked him over and mauled him very severely, and his life was only saved by his brother approaching, attracting a second charge, and finishing off the animal within a few feet of his own person.

A lion should never, if it can possibly be avoided, be fired at head on. Such a shot is almost certain to be useless, and the bullet will most probably glance off or fail to penetrate the bony structure surrounding the brain. As a rule, however, from the animal's habit of glancing askance at and not directly confronting the hunter, a side shot can generally be obtained. It is advisable always to let a



*A SPOTTED LIONESS—SOMALILAND.*



SOMALILAND WATER CARRIERS.

*Hulton-DeMunnich*

passing lion get a little ahead of one. A better and safer shot at the heart and lungs can thus be obtained, and there is less probability of attracting the beast's charge. The lion, being a soft-skinned animal, is usually far more easily killed than thick-skinned game, such as elephant, rhinoceros, buffalo, or even the larger antelopes—creatures very tenacious of life. The .303 or .256 Mannlicher, using expanding bullets, will quite readily account for these animals. Armed with one of the new powerful double rifles of .400 or .450 bore, burning smokeless powder, and delivering an impact every whit as crushing as the old .8-bore with black powder, the hunter, if he can shoot straight, should be perfectly secure. Hollow-pointed, or soft-nosed, expanding, and not solid bullets should always be used with lions, the object of the hunter being to deliver instantly as deadly and disabling a wound as possible. For spooring operations the aid of a native hunter is necessary. In following lions into bush and cover—whether wounded or unwounded—the greatest care is required, and the operation is always a most risky one. The Boer name for the lion is *Leeuw*. Native names are as follows:—Zulu and Swazi, *Ingonyama*, *Imbubi*, and *Ibubesi*; Bechuana, *Tau*; Matabele, *Isilouan*; Masarwa Bushmen, 'Gham (with a click); Swahili, *Simba*; Somali, *Libbah*; Galla, *Lendja*.

## THE LEOPARD

Leopards are found all over Africa, from Algeria to within a few miles of Cape Town ; in fact, of all the *felidae*, they seem to be most widely distributed throughout the continent of Asia and Africa. The marking of the spots or "rosettes" varies somewhat in different countries, but, making allowances for climatic and local variations, there is little real distinction between the leopard of either part of the world. In South Africa the leopard is known almost universally by its Boer misnomer of *tijger*, and many people, hearing the tiger so commonly spoken of throughout the country, and knowing little of natural history, have come to the conclusion that tigers proper really do exist in Africa. It is singular that the Dutch colonists, while christening the true leopard "*tijger*," always speak of the cheetah, which is also found in Africa, as "*luipaard*." Among native tribes the leopard is known by the Zulus, Matabele, Swazis, and Matonga as *Ngwe*, by the Bechuanas and Basutos as *Nkwe*. In Swahili it is called *Chui*, while the Somalis know it as *Shabel*.

Although the lion has been driven by the advances of civilisation from large portions of South Africa, the leopard has managed to maintain itself without much difficulty in almost every part of the country. Even at the present time these animals are to be found among the mountains about Stellenbosch, within 30 miles of Cape Town. Wherever it can find a



sufficiency of food, water, and suitable lurking-places, the leopard may be met with in nearly every part of the African continent. It is extremely partial to mountain and hill country, where it establishes its lair among the caves and holes of kloofs and rocky mountain sides. Thick bush and forest, and the jungly banks of rivers, are also favourite lurking-places of this essentially nocturnal, shy, and secretive animal. For their food, leopards prey mostly on small antelopes, wild boars (warthog or bush-pig), baboons, monkeys, rock-rabbits (dassies), guinea-fowl, and other game birds. They create enormous havoc among farmstock, and kill and devour calves, sheep, goats, and even good-sized colts. Years ago, when living in a wild mountain region of Cape Colony—the Witteberg, on the Plessis river, between Aberdeen and Willowmore—the friends with whom I stayed were greatly troubled by these animals. They bred horses, and in the first season lost eight or nine foals and colts, all killed by these fierce marauders. Leopards were, in fact, very abundant and very daring among these remote and secluded hills. Not a night passed but we heard their weird cry from some kloof in the vicinity. When the homestead was being built, shortly before my arrival, the mason engaged on the job happened to be at work on the upper part of the walls; looking down, he espied a leopard, which had calmly entered the house and was making a survey. The mason was alone and had no gun, and as a leopard can climb a ladder or a wall as easily as it can ascend a tree, he judged it the wiser course

to keep quiet until the beast had taken its departure. We had great trouble to keep down leopards among the mountains. Occasionally a combined hunt was got up with neighbouring farmers, and one or two of the brutes were killed. But the Boers of the vicinity were by no means keen to try conclusions with the "tjger." A young Dutchman, shortly before my arrival, had been terribly clawed in an encounter with one of these carnivora and had died of his wounds, and his fellows chose rather to achieve the downfall of the leopards about them by means of strychnine pills, inserted in the carcase of a dead kid, or in a piece of flesh. "Poisoning clubs" exist all over Cape Colony at the present day; rewards are offered, and leopards, caracals, the various wild cats, genets, baboons, jackals, and so forth, are thus kept under and destroyed. It is, of course, to be remembered that all nocturnal animals are very difficult to find in daylight, and the farmers for their own protection are bound to resort to the use of poison.

It is a fact, not known to all naturalists and hunters, that the leopard is in the habit of depositing carcasses of slain prey in the forks or branches of some low tree, no great way from its cave or hiding-place. Such a place is well known to Cape Colonists as "the leopard's larder." The food often becomes high and stinking, but the leopard, like the lion, is not a specially clean feeder, and will devour a decaying carcase as readily as will a hyæna or a vulture. I well remember being shown one of these larders by

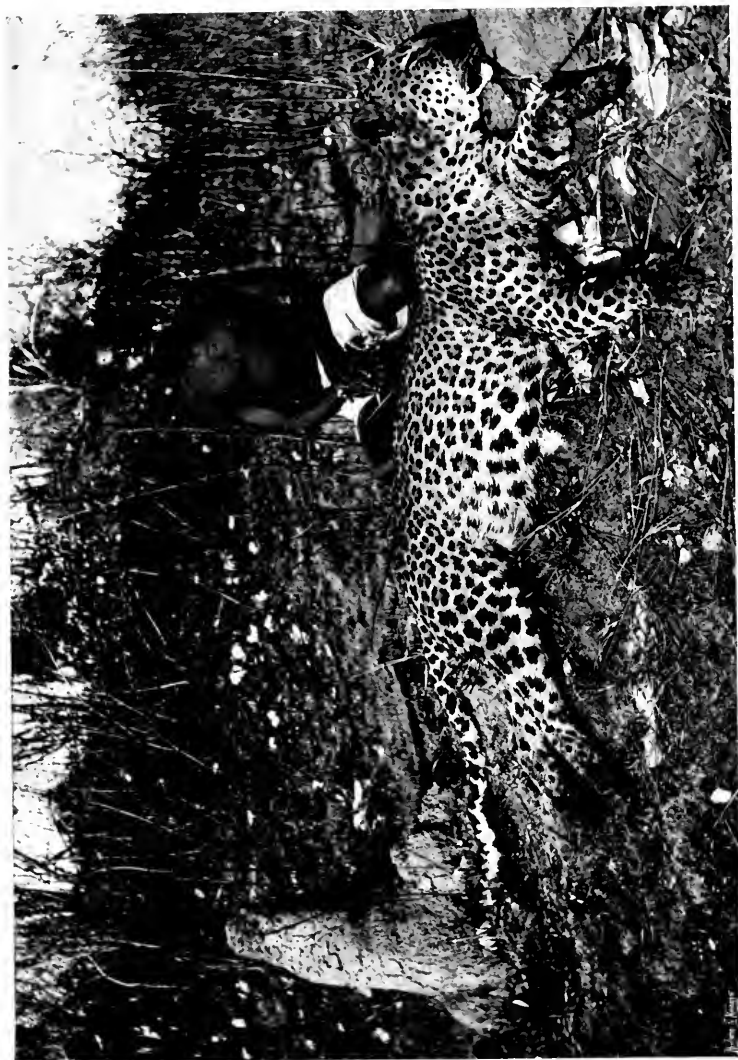
a Kaffir spoorer, who hunted with me ; its odours will remain always in my memory. There were the remains of a baboon and the carcase of a klipspringer fawn. In mountain country such as I speak of, the leopard will, I think, in preference kill the klipspringer before any other quarry. In this he shows his good taste, for the venison of this most dainty little antelope is among the best in all Africa. Next to the klipspringer he chooses the baboon, an animal which abounds only too plentifully in almost every range of Cape Colony. The baboons look upon the leopard as their most deadly foe and hate him accordingly. They are most alert, wide-awake beasts, and in daytime have sentries always posted ; still, notwithstanding all their cleverness, the leopard usually gets the better of them and secures his dinner when he needs it. It is said, and I believe with truth, that occasionally two or three "old men" baboons, when desperate or cornered, will go for the leopard, and nathless his strength, his teeth, and his fearful claws, rend him to bits. An adult baboon can instantly kill a big and strong dog by tearing out his throat with his enormously powerful teeth, and I see no reason whatever why two or three of these fierce apes should not vanquish a leopard. Next to klipspringers and baboons, the mountain leopard takes as his prey rhebok, duyker, and an occasional foal of the mountain zebra. In addition to farm stock he is greatly addicted to dogs, which he looks upon as an especial dainty ; and he will dare much and even enter a camp or farm enclosure to obtain so much desired a

booty. In the lower country bushbuck are a very favourite prey.

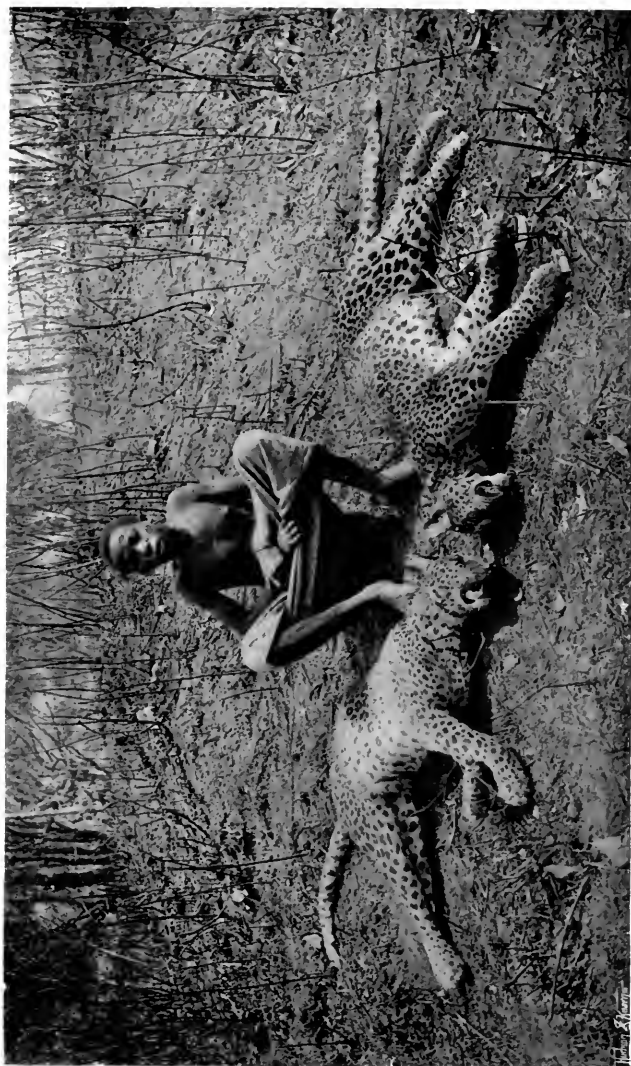
Mountain leopards are smaller and more compact and more muscular than the leopard of the plains and bush country. They have usually much finer and thicker coats. The skin of a leopard has from the earliest times and among all peoples—barbarian or civilised—been held in the highest estimation. And in truth there is no more beautiful pelt in the world than that of these handsome *felidae*, when in good condition. A well-grown African leopard will measure as much as 2 feet 5 inches at the shoulders, 7 feet in extreme length, and will weigh 150 lbs. Mr. F. V. Kirby, who has had great experience of these animals, gives as the best measurements of a low-country leopard met with in his experience : Shoulder height, 2 feet 7 inches ; length from tip to tip in a straight line, 6 feet 11 inches ; girth behind shoulder, 35½ inches ; and girth of fore arm, 12½ inches.

The female produces from three to four cubs, though as many as five and even six have occasionally been noted.

Leopards, being essentially nocturnal beasts, are only by the merest chance encountered in daytime. In hill country they are even more difficult to come across than in the neighbourhood of grass plains, where, after the annual veldt fires, they may be occasionally seen. For about an hour at dawn, however, if the sportsman is about the mountain where leopards are known to abide, they may sometimes be met with. They are, however, most shy and cunning



AN EIGHT-FOOT LEOPARD.



A MORNING BAG.

beasts ; they can hide themselves in a place incredibly small ; and from the stony nature of much of their habitat they are extremely hard to spoor.

Although, as I have said, leopards are abundant all over Africa, they are, from their extreme reluctance to show themselves, bagged surprisingly seldom, even by experienced hunters. Usually they are shot in a purely chance encounter, springing up from bush or long grass, or from the well-clothed banks of some periodical water-course. Occasionally, like the lion, they may be surprised at a kill, and the sportsman, returning to look after some head of game shot the day before, may meet with one of these handsome carnivora, though the chance is a less probable one than that of meeting a lion—in country where lions exist. Occasionally, in the bushbuck drives carried out periodically in the dense bush-country of the maritime regions of Eastern Cape Colony and Kaffraria, a leopard, pushed accidentally towards the gunner by the Kaffir beaters, is killed with a charge of buck-shot—"loopers," as these missiles are called in the Old Colony. A friend of the writer, the late Mr. Fred. Lockner, one of the best sportsmen and shots in South Africa, who died untimely in Mashonaland, once killed a leopard with a single charge of No. 5 shot. The beast, attracted by the smell of game meat, which was hanging about the camp, crept up one evening as the party were sitting near the camp fire, and, standing up on its hind legs, began to claw down a piece of flesh. Lockner was quick as lightning in his movements, and, instantly picking up

a shot gun lying near, he let drive at the leopard's throat, and killed it dead on the spot.

It should always be remembered that, although the leopard will, as an almost invariable rule, fly from mankind, a wounded leopard will face any odds, and, charging straight at the gunner, will do all in its power to secure a bloody revenge for its injuries. A lion, although badly wounded, will not seldom slink off if it can gain cover. Not so the leopard, which either flies furiously straight at the gunner, if it can make out his whereabouts, or, hiding itself in some patch of grass or bush, waits for its revenge and springs unexpectedly on the advancing spoorers. Once the brute fastens itself upon its human foe, it inflicts with teeth and claws, especially the hinder claws, a frightful mauling, and, even if the sportsman recovers from his wounds, he will bear traces of the injuries for the rest of his life. Many fatalities have occurred in Africa from the attack of a wounded leopard, and, small though the animal appears in comparison with the lion, it possesses enormous strength and activity, and is one of the most dangerous of all beasts to tackle when hit and followed up.

There are various methods of hunting leopards, A favourite one, especially in Somaliland, where it has met with much success in the last dozen years, is to watch by night, either at a kill made by the leopard previously, or at a living goat or sheep tied up for the purpose. If the sportsman lies up by the kill—usually some native sheep or goat belonging to a Somali village—he should be most careful to approach



or touch the carcase as little as possible. He should take care to erect his screen of thorn or brushwood down wind, remembering, however, not to place it in the actual path by which the leopard retired, as the beast is much more likely than not to return by the same route. In Somaliland and other parts of East Africa leopards are apparently much less secretive and suspicious than in the southern part of the continent, and they will there usually return to their kill at sundown or even before. Major Swayne mentions an instance where, having driven off at 4 o'clock a leopard which he found drinking the blood of an antelope wounded by himself, he sat 30 yards away beneath the shade of a bush and waited. In an hour's time the leopard returned boldly to the kill and was at once shot. In watching at night the greatest caution and stillness should be observed; starlight nights are, as a rule, better than moonlight ones—both lions and leopards displaying more boldness in attacking baits during the former than during the latter. In hill country, if the cave or lair of a leopard or pair of leopards can be located, it may be worth while to watch from some chosen vantage ground for the going forth of the animal, which in quiet and undisturbed localities would be towards late afternoon. The approach should, of course, be made with the utmost caution, a pair of rubber-soled shoes being employed.

In fairly open country, and where the ground admits of spooring, especially, for instance, where the animal has made its way along the sand-bed of a dry

river course, leopards can be followed up, and with the aid of a pack of dogs located, driven out, and shot. On such an occasion the brute, when baited by a number of barking hounds, will not only severely maul many of the dogs themselves, but is quite as likely as not to attack the human hunter. Nearly every sportsman going up country in South Africa takes with him a nondescript pack of hounds—some greyhounds, some rough Boer dogs—(usually crossed with greyhound blood), some mongrels, pure and simple. These animals, though a nuisance at times, act as efficient guards at night, and are useful for following up leopards, lions, and other game. Half a dozen dogs is quite enough for the purpose, and the approach should be made as silently as possible; it may be better even to hold the dogs in leash till the last moment.

Once fairly hit in a vital part, the leopard succumbs readily enough, but the gunner facing this most active and courageous beast requires to be a quick shot and to have all his wits about him.

A .400 or .450 rifle, burning smokeless powder, in conjunction with a hollow-pointed or soft-nosed expanding bullet, is sufficient to account for any leopard. Even the .303 or Mannlicher, always remembering to use an expanding bullet, is quite good and reliable enough for this beast of prey.

#### THE CHEETAH

This animal, known familiarly, though not quite correctly, as the hunting leopard, is found in many

parts of Africa from north to south, wherever the terrain is suitable to its habits. It inhabits usually dry, open plateau country, or hill districts, and is not a frequenter of forest or densely bushed regions. In West Africa, for example, north of the Portuguese province of Angola, it seems to be practically unknown. It is a familiar animal in Somaliland, East Africa, and nearly all South Africa. Although bearing certain points of resemblance to the true leopard, and having the same dentition, the cheetah is, in fact, a widely different kind of animal. Naturalists rank it in a genus of its own, *Cynaelurus*, and have bestowed upon it the specific title, *Cynaelurus jubatus*. As mentioned in the account of the leopard, the Boers call the cheetah *luipaard*, sometimes, but much more rarely, the *vlakke-tijger*—leopard of the plains. The Amakosa Kaffirs know it as *schlozi*, the Zulus as *Ngulule*, the Bechuanas as *Leñau*, the Swazis as *Ihlose*, and the Transvaal Basutos as *Sigakaka*.

Although one of the *felidae*, the cheetah has blunt claws, which are scarcely retractile at all, and are not, like the leopard's, sheathed when unemployed. It is a much more slender beast than the leopard, and stands considerably higher on the leg. The fur, ochreous yellow in colour, is coarser than the leopard's, short, and covered with small, circular, black markings. Below, the body colour fades to white and the fur becomes more woolly. Upon the neck and shoulders the coat is thick, woolly, and upstanding, giving the animal the maned appearance from which it takes its scientific appellation, *jubatus*. In

hill districts, as is natural, these animals exhibit thicker and more woolly fur and finer and more bushy tails. The head is short and thick, with a high crown—a widely different head to that of the leopard and other cats. The tail is long—about half the length of the whole body—partially spotted, with the bushy extremity usually ending in a white tip. A well-grown African cheetah will stand 2 feet 8 inches or 9 inches at the shoulder, and measure as much as 7 feet in extreme length.

The cheetah is a silent and secretive creature, shyer and even more stealthy than the leopard, and is only by chance encountered in daylight. These animals will, however, in quiet districts, hunt in daytime, and on the Setlagoli river, in British Bechuanaland, I well remember a white miner encountering a pair of them at eleven o'clock in the morning. They were stalking some small antelope, and as the man had no gun with him and came very close upon them, he sustained rather a scare. Cheetahs are, however, in reality very timid creatures so far as mankind are concerned, and when wounded they are not very dangerous beasts to tackle, seldom showing the savage pugnacity of the leopard. When suddenly put up or disturbed they will usually canter off with curious throaty grunts. There are few fleetier animals in the world for a short distance, and the ease with which a cheetah will, in Africa as in India, run into an antelope which it has stalked and surprised, is amazing. The dash at its prey is lightning-like. I have watched the action of one of these

animals when running over an open grass plain ; it is peculiarly smooth, sweeping, and swift—the very perfection of animal motion. A mounted sportsman, except perhaps in very open country, where a long run could be assured, has no chance at all with them. Most usually cheetahs hunt in pairs, but larger troops of four or five, probably family parties before they have broken up by pairing, are sometimes seen. These animals prey on small antelopes, seizing their quarry by the throat and never relaxing their grip till the prey is dead. Near kraals and farmhouses they kill and devour sheep, goats, and even calves. Hares and the larger game-birds are also devoured by them, and they do not disdain an occasional young ostrich. The springbok is a very favourite booty, and cheetahs have no great difficulty in stalking and running down these most fleet and watchful antelopes.

Cheetahs are not often shot ; when encountered they may be easily secured by an expanding bullet from any small-bore rifle such as the .256 or .303. In South Africa they seem to me to be most abundant in Bechuanaland and on the borders of the Kalahari Desert. Here the natives snare them mostly, but an occasional cheetah is run into with dogs, while jackal hunting, and clubbed or speared. A kaross or cloak of a dozen or sixteen skins of these animals, beautifully sewn with fine sinew by natives, forms an exceedingly handsome rug, and the Bechuanas, even far up country, obtain big prices for them—from ten to twelve pounds. Cheetahs are easily tamed, and the cubs make gentle and very entertaining pets.

When quite young they are warm grey in colour, the fur thick and woolly, and the spots very faintly defined.

Other carnivora are to be found in Africa, such as the caracal or African lynx (*Rooi-kat* of the Boers), the serval and other small cats, as well as the Cape hunting dog (*Lycaon pictus*), the various jackals, the hyænas, the Aardwolf, a hyæna-like animal, the Abyssinian wolf, a beast almost as closely approaching the foxes as the wolves, and other creatures. These, however, can scarcely be classed as big game, in the sportsman's acceptance of the phrase; and, the writer's space being limited, they are accordingly passed by in favour of worthier objects of the hunter's rifle.





## CHAPTER III

### THE PACHYDERMS

By H. A. BRYDEN

#### THE ELEPHANT

ELEPHANTS have been pursued for their ivory with such determination, ever since fire-arms were introduced into Africa, that they have now become much restricted in their habitats, and have to be sought in the farthest and most remote portions of Central and East and West Africa. South Africa, where fifty years ago these huge mammals abounded, from middle Bechuanaland northward, is now practically shot out south of the Zambesi and Cunene rivers. Only a few troops are to be found here and there in Rhodesia, Gazaland, Zululand, and the Beira country. In Cape

Colony, it is true, some good troops still linger in the extreme south, in the Knysna forest and the Addo bush, but these are carefully protected and have been for seventy years past. In British Central Africa (Nyasaland) they are now carefully protected, and may only be shot by special permit. They are found sparingly in Portuguese West and South-East Africa, in considerable numbers in German and British East Africa, the interior of Gallaland and Somaliland, and Abyssinia. About the Upper Nile, in the almost unknown country opened up by the reconquest of the Soudan, they are undoubtedly at the present time most abundant. Sir William Garstin, who has had unrivalled opportunities of observing elephants amid the vast marshes of the Upper Nile, says of them in a recent article in *Country Life*: "Nowhere have I seen them in such numbers so fearless of man. I have watched them pass to leeward of a group of Dinkas without taking the slightest notice of them, and without a single trunk being raised in protest. Even when the steamer came upon them suddenly, when feeding in the reeds, they rarely showed any alarm, and merely retreated quietly and without hurry. This is doubtless to be accounted for by the fact that the elephants in this region have not been hunted or disturbed for many years."<sup>1</sup> They are also to be found in large

<sup>1</sup> Concerning the Upper Nile regions it is to be noted that by a proclamation in the *Sudan Gazette* of August 1, 1903, large districts are closed to travellers and hunters. These include (a) the district south of the Sobat and Pibor, east of the Bahr-el-Zaraf, and north of Shambe; (b) the country on the west bank of the White Nile south of a line drawn from Fashoda to El Eddeiya; (c) the



numbers in the almost unknown and unexplored regions lying between the borders of Abyssinia and Gallaland and the Nile. About the western, northern, and eastern regions of the great lakes, the Victoria Albert Nyanza, elephants are still plentiful in places, while in the vast Congo hinterland, in spite of the ravages of the hunters employed by Belgian officials, plenty of the great tusk bearers may yet be encountered. Here and there, too, behind the coast regions of Ashanti, Nigeria, the Gold Coast, and other colonies, elephants are to be found in fair numbers; the country is difficult of access, and not many white men choose to incur the climatic risks of these unhealthy regions, and the tremendous labour of pursuing these animals on foot in the exhausting heat of the hottest and most uncomfortable parts of Equatorial Africa.

It is to be remembered always that, at the present time, the hunter cannot range so freely in pursuit of elephants as he could a score of years ago or less. Here and there he may find happy hunting-grounds, where the white man's laws run not, and the sway of civilisation is utterly unknown. But there are not many such places in Africa since its partitionment, and before setting forth to hunt these animals the sportsman will find it necessary to make himself carefully acquainted with the various game laws and protective regulations of the territories in which he is to make his expedition. In Abyssinia, for instance,

Bahr-el-Ghazal Province. Special permits for travel and sport in those regions will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

by favour of King Menelik, he can hunt elephants at pleasure, but the permission of that monarch must first be asked and obtained, and a carefully signed and sealed permit secured, which will frank the sportsman through the various provinces of that somewhat turbulent country. In German and British East Africa, where some of the finest elephant-shooting in the world is yet to be obtained, elephants are now pretty carefully protected, and the gunner will in any case have to pay a heavy license fee for his sport.

Elephants vary considerably in stature, and especially in the size and quality of their ivory, in different parts of Africa. Fifty or sixty years ago some of the largest elephants and tusk-bearers used to be shot on the Limpopo and Botletli rivers, South Africa. The elephant of Somaliland, a dry and barren country, although of fair average size—about 10 feet 6 inches in the large males,—carries poor tusks, which average little more than 35 lbs. to 70 lbs. the pair. Undoubtedly the finest ivory in the world is borne by the elephants of Equatorial, and especially of East Equatorial Africa. Mr. A. H. Neumann, hunting in this country, towards Lake Rudolf, some eight years since, shot several bulls carrying teeth weighing as much as 115 lbs. and 116 lbs. apiece, and measuring eight or nine feet in length over the curve. The ivory of this part of Africa is also the most valuable and most saleable, being what is known as “soft” ivory. That exported from West Africa is more usually “hard”



*ELEPHANTS CROSSING RIVER—UPPER NILE.*



ELEPHANTS IN HIGH GRASS—UPPER NILE.

ivory, and has less commercial value. The finest pair of teeth yet exported from East Africa came through Zanzibar in 1900. They measured respectively 10 feet 2 inches and 10 feet 4 inches in length, and weighed 224 lbs. and 235 lbs. apiece. They sold for close on £1000 the pair, and were secured for a museum in the United States. These magnificent teeth, which will probably now never be surpassed, are stated to have been secured by an Arab hunter in the neighbourhood of Mount Kenia. One of the finest tusks ever seen in this country is in the possession of Sir Edmund Loder, himself a great sportsman and collector. It measures 9 feet 5 inches over the curve, and weighs 184 lbs. Cow teeth weigh very much less than those of bulls, and seldom exceed, even in the most exceptional instances, more than 25 lbs. or 30 lbs. apiece; usually they are very much less, averaging not much more than 20 lbs. to 24 lbs. the pair.

The African elephant, besides being a very different-looking beast from the Indian species,—having a much more sloping forehead, much larger ears, and carrying infinitely finer ivory,—is, as a general rule, considerably superior to his Asiatic cousin in stature. There are no carefully recorded measurements exceeding 11 feet in height, but there can be little doubt that in the past elephants have been shot in Africa standing close on 12 feet at the shoulder. Oswell, one of the greatest and most reliable of all South African hunters, gives the height of the biggest ever shot by him as 12

feet 2 inches, but sporting measurements were not so much thought of or so accurately taken in those days (the 'forties) as they are now. At the present time good representative African wild elephants probably average in stature about 10 feet 6 inches.<sup>1</sup>

The African elephant is not so forest-loving a species as his cousin of Hindostan. He frequents by preference fairly open country, studded with bush, and is by no means averse to hills and mountains, in the kloofs and valleys and upon the slopes of which he finds suitable pasturage. He is a wonderful hill-climber, and whether ascending or descending, can, if he chooses, progress at a pace quite astonishing to look at. These animals are very partial to the park-like, thin, open forest country, where trees of low stature, seldom exceeding thirty feet in height, are usually to be found. Their food consists of bark, leafage, the sappy portions of roots, which they excavate with their trunks and tusks, and wild fruits of various kinds. The roots thus excavated are well chewed, and the juices having been extracted, the woody remnants are rejected. Elephants almost always feed and drink at night, usually making their way to water between 9 and 12 P.M., and thereafter feeding till early morning. During the heat of the day, especially during hot weather, they rest, sleeping, almost invariably in a standing attitude, shaded

<sup>1</sup> In the marshes of the Upper Nile elephants, practically free as they are from the persecution of hunters, have the opportunity of growing to great size. Some of them carry magnificent tusks. "One old bull in particular," says Sir William Garstin, "owned a pair of ivories such as the elephant hunter might secure in his dreams, but could very rarely come across in real life."



ON THE MOVE.



SOMALILAND ELEPHANT.



by the foliage of some good-sized tree. In the Upper Nile marshes these animals appear to have developed somewhat different habits from their fellows of other parts of Africa. "Here," says Sir William Garstin, "they stand throughout the day immersed in water up to their bellies, and with their backs almost hidden by the high growth of reeds. Here they can always be traced by the white egrets which invariably accompany them, and which feed upon the ticks and other insects with which their hides are infested. A herd of elephants moving through dense grass can be kept in sight, even though they themselves are invisible, by the fluttering up and down of these white birds." At this, the hottest period of the year—the commencement of the rainy season—these elephants apparently never leave the marshes at all, night or day, and their food must be limited to grass and reeds.

Elephants feel intense heat considerably, and if hunted by mounted men during the hot hours, can often be rendered thoroughly exhausted, thus falling easy victims. At almost all other times, however, they can travel enormous distances, and the foot-hunter finds the task of pursuing them very often a hopeless one, even if he continue on the spoor for forty-eight hours at a stretch. Elephant-hunting on foot, one of the most hazardous forms of sport in the world, is at the same time the most exhausting. It is to be remembered that although, in the good days of South African hunting, elephants could be pursued on horseback, that form of sport is now, owing to

the practical extermination of these animals south of the Zambesi, all but a thing of the past. Here and there, perhaps, in Angola, Portuguese West Africa, a horse can be kept alive and used ; but the bush is terribly thick and thorny, where these animals have their habitat, and it may be doubted whether hunting there on horseback could be often feasible. In Somaliland, where, however, elephant are now becoming distinctly scarce, ponies can be employed. In almost every other part of the African continent the hunter must follow his gigantic game on foot.

At its ordinary gait the African elephant progresses, with singularly noiseless tread, at a good pace. Its shuffling trot is pretty fast, and when the great beast is enraged and makes up its mind to charge, it will not only overtake any man on foot without difficulty, but will for a short distance make it extremely unpleasant even for a sportsman mounted on a good horse. The charge of an elephant is, as even the most cool and self-reliant hunter is fain to confess, one of the most nerve-shaking experiences that any man can hope to go through. With ears spread out at right angles, like a pair of sails, screaming like a locomotive, the great pachyderm comes down upon his disturber at thirty miles an hour. There are two things that usually help to preserve the steady sportsman. In the first place, a bullet of heavy calibre, or of sufficient smashing power, will almost certainly suffice to turn the charge, especially if the shot be directed at the chest : even the head shot is often

sufficient, and the stunning impact, although not actually killing the monster outright, either drops him for the time being or so shakes him as to turn him from his purpose. In the second place, elephants, although extraordinarily acute of scent, have very poor eyesight. If the hunter, even though he stand within forty or fifty paces of the big pachyderm, remains perfectly still, he will in all probability be taken for a tree stump or some other natural object and passed by. The frontal head shot, so popular formerly with Indian elephant-hunters, is a matter of some risk with the African species. The forehead is much more sloping, and the brain-pan is not so easily penetrated. The side shot, aiming a little to the left of the orifice of the ear, is a much safer one if the head is to be fired at at all. Recent sportsmen, armed with modern small-bore rifles, have had very successful experiences with the shot between the ear and eye ; Mr. A. H. Neumann, especially, using the .303 Lee-Metford rifle and solid bullets, having killed elephants of the largest size with these tiny missiles. The heart and lungs are, however, the most readily accessible of the vital parts, and the average sportsman will still in most cases prefer to plant his bullet in those organs. With the .303 Mr. Neumann made also successful shooting at the heart, and secured his game without difficulty.

In the dense wait-a-bit thorn jungles in which elephants love to seclude themselves, however, it is not often easy to pick one's shot carefully at a vital part. A weapon giving great shocking

force is then much more preferable. The double .8-bore was, until quite recently, an ideal weapon for this kind of work, as at close quarters and for stopping a headlong charge the smashing blow delivered by its heavy bullet might always be relied upon. The very powerful .400 and .450 rifles introduced during the last two or three years, however, using cordite powder, will be found much more handy, and in conjunction with solid bullets will suffice to deliver as deadly an impact as the old .577 or large-bore weapons of the Paradox type. A sportsman following elephant in dense bush, if armed with a .450 double rifle of the above type and followed by a reliable gun-bearer carrying another such rifle, or a double .8-bore Paradox, should be almost perfectly equipped. If the wind is carefully studied, as it must be, the hunter will find it not a difficult matter to approach to within twenty or thirty yards, or even less, of his quarry. With elephants, if the sportsman wishes to bring down his game quickly, close quarters are far preferable to attempting shots at more than fifty yards. If the elephant charges straight at the hunter, the head is often held at such an angle that to attempt the brain shot is worse than useless. It is better in such a case to aim for the chest, the bullet, piercing the trunk,—which is usually held down with the point curled up on such an occasion,—will then penetrate the heart. Such, at all events, is the experience of Mr. Selous, one of the most successful of all elephant-hunters, who has killed several charging monsters in this way.

An elephant can, however, more often than not be turned by a bullet, especially from a large-bore or powerful rifle, delivered at the head, even front on, when close up to the gunner. Still it is always to be remembered that elephant-hunting is one of the most risky of all sporting pursuits, and, sooner or later, even the coolest and most seasoned hunter, however well he may be armed, is pretty certain to meet with mishap or even disaster. Oswell, one of the most daring and successful of the earlier big-game hunters, had some extraordinary escapes. Once in the dense jungle of the Zouga river (now better known as the Botletli), towards Lake Ngami, he was being hunted by an infuriated beast. Torn from his horse by the thorns, he fell right in the path of the elephant, which, however, by an extraordinary piece of good fortune, went right over him without injuring him in any way. Selous, while hunting elephants on horseback, was once caught by one of these animals, which, driving her tusk into the horse's rump, overturned rider and steed. Selous in the next moment remembered noticing a very strong smell of elephant, and found himself beneath the belly of the huge beast. Scrambling out from between the hind legs of the monster, he made his escape, and presently, having recovered his rifle, had the hardihood and the good fortune, in spite of so shaking an experience, of bringing her down. Neumann, shooting near Lake Rudolf a few years since, had an even more narrow escape. His Lee-Metford rifle magazine, with which he had had some previous trouble, refused to act, and,

pursued hotly by a vicious and wounded elephant, he was caught and thrown down. "Kneeling over me," he says, "she made three distinct lunges at me, sending her left tusk through the biceps of my right arm and stabbing me between the right ribs, at the same time pounding my chest with her head (or rather, I suppose, the thick part of her trunk between the tusks) and crushing in my ribs on the same side. . . . What hurt me was the grinding my chest underwent. Whether she supposed she had killed me, or whether it was that she disliked the smell of my blood or bethought her of her calf, I cannot tell; but she then left me and went away."<sup>1</sup> After this extraordinary escape Mr. Neumann was, needless to say, laid up for many weeks, and had to endure a long and tedious period of convalescence by the shores of Lake Rudolf.

Few, however, are the men who once overtaken by a wild elephant escape with their lives. Usually they are pierced through and through by the monster's tusks and crushed with its forelegs to a shapeless human pulp. A native hunter, in the earlier days of Mr. Selous' career, was literally torn into three pieces by one of these infuriated pachyderms. The chest, with the head and arms attached, had been wrenched from the trunk just below the breast bone; one leg and thigh had been torn from the pelvis; the remainder of the body composed the third fragment. This ghastly work had been done

<sup>1</sup> *Elephant Hunting in East Equatorial Africa*, p. 324, A. H. Neumann. Rowland Ward and Co.

by the monster's trunk, the brute meanwhile holding down the unfortunate man with its foot or knee. Some idea of the gigantic strength of the elephant may be gathered from this tragic incident.

Neumann took a long time to recover his injuries,—some two months,—but after that time he was able once more to renew his campaign against the elephants. Using the same .303 rifle, he succeeded in his next two hunts in shooting five more animals of the largest size—two on one day, three on another. One of the tusks of these giants weighed no less than 117½ lbs. when cut out, and lost only 1½ lbs. in the drying out. Another attained the weight of 117 lbs. Such magnificent trophies were sufficient to recompense the hunter for his previous mishap; he had the satisfaction, to boot, of being able to overcome once more the most formidable game in Africa, one of which had so nearly succeeded in killing him. It is worthy of note that these five elephants were all killed by the tiny Lee-Metford bullet, with body shots.

A pair of bull elephants, carrying good and heavy teeth, is a respectable bag for any sportsman. At the present day, when the number of these animals is becoming year by year so greatly reduced in Africa, the sportsman, even when he gets a fair chance, ought to be able to content himself with such a score. Selous, in his earlier career, hunted ivory as a matter of business, and for a year or two made fair profits from the pursuit. During one hunt, he and three friends, Messrs. Ward, Clarkson, and Cross, shot twenty-two elephants in a single day—a huge

bag. On another day, shortly after, three of the same hunters killed nineteen elephants out of a troop of twenty-one. These are enormous bags, but they are quite put into the shade by the exploit of two or three Boer hunters, named Van Zyl, some three-and-twenty years ago in the Okavango River Country, north-west of Lake Ngami. These men were part of the great trek which left the Transvaal towards 1879 and made its way painfully and laboriously, and with infinite loss of life and fortune, to the Portuguese province of Mossamedes, on the West Coast. The hunters managed to drive a troop of 104 elephants into a marsh, where the unfortunate beasts became completely embogged. They were all slain during the course of a single day. It was a wasteful and most wanton slaughter, the more inexcusable from the fact that a large number of the animals were cows and calves, and their tusks either of small account or lacking altogether.

During his first three seasons—1873, 1874, and 1875—as a professional elephant-hunter, Selous shot seventy-eight elephants, nearly all of them secured with a common smooth-bore elephant gun, such as was formerly used by the Dutch hunters. This rude weapon, which now hangs in Mr. Selous' Museum at Worpleston, in Surrey, carried four spherical balls to the pound, and was loaded with 17 drachms of trade powder. Its recoil was naturally terrific; and one cannot sufficiently admire the hardihood and strength of nerve displayed by the old school of hunters who could, and did,





ELEPHANT IN ANT HILL COUNTRY.



CAMP FOLLOWERS COOKING—SOMALILAND.

season after season, use such weapons. The big-game hunter of the present day should, if he has anything like the opportunity, run down to Mr. Selous' Museum and have a look at this fearsome weapon; he may then congratulate himself on the immense improvements that have taken place in sporting rifles during the last score or so of years. Among native hunters, by whom, after all, the vast majority of elephants are at the present time slain in Africa, these animals are still commonly shot with cheap smooth-bore guns of  $\cdot 12$  calibre. Usually these are percussion guns; occasionally even the old flint-lock is found in use. Here and there a native hunter may be found the proud possessor of a Snider or a Martini-Henry rifle. The Martini-Henry is, notwithstanding modern improvements, a first-rate sporting rifle, and, as the writer can testify, is, with the solid lead bullet, most effective for killing all kinds of heavy game.

Here and there in savage Africa the elephant is still destroyed by the ancient methods, time-honoured by the usage of thousands of years. The spear-trap is perhaps the most familiar contrivance. The great spear, to which is attached a heavy weight—a big stone, for instance—is fastened to a tree in such a way that the elephant in its passage releases the weapon, which plunges into its back and inflicts a deadly wound. Pitfalls are also employed. In Nyasaland are still to be found in some plenty the huge broad-bladed, heavy-hafted assegais, with which the native hunter, seated in a tree, used to deal his blow

at the passing elephant. Even thirty years ago, in the northern part of Matabeleland, natives still attacked the elephant with their axes, aiming their strokes at the heel ; and the Achilles tendon once severed, the mighty game was rendered perfectly helpless. The finest and most daring hunters, whether white or black, in all Africa, were undoubtedly the Hamran Arabs, with whom Sir Samuel Baker hunted about the Nile tributaries of Abyssinia in the early 'sixties. These wonderful Nimrods possessed horses and rode recklessly. One of them would take his horse close up to an elephant, which would then give chase. As the monster pressed after the flying horseman, out would dash two other mounted hunters, armed with sharp swords. Riding right up to the heels of the elephant, one of these Arabs would suddenly leap from his saddle, and with one mighty two-handed stroke sever the tendon of the monster's hind leg. The elephant at once dislocated the foot in another stride or two, and was practically *hors de combat*. The other tendon was then similarly treated. The elephant bled to death ; and thus, with two strokes of a sharp sword, the huge pachyderm was conquered. The Arabs were, as may be supposed, not always the victors in these heroic encounters, and fatal accidents occasionally happened among them. Sir Samuel Baker had much experience of the methods of these wonderful hunters, and always spoke and wrote of their magnificent courage in terms of the highest praise. One wonders, now that the Soudan has once more been opened up to Europeans, whether any

of the Hamran Arabs still survive. Their country lay beyond the western frontier of Abyssinia, where, even at the present day, a good deal of game is still to be found.

The flesh of the elephant is coarse and not very palatable to European sportsmen. It was once the fashion to speak of the foot, baked for many hours, as a particular delicacy. This mass of glutinous matter does not, however, at the present time, appear to recommend itself to the palate or the stomachs of English hunters. The heart is undoubtedly the best part of the elephant's anatomy for eating purposes. Roasted over the embers of the camp fire, this part of the animal will be found excellent eating, tender and well-tasted.

### THE RHINOCEROS

Two kinds of rhinoceros have up to the present time been identified in Africa. These are the so-called white rhinoceros, with which I will deal first, and the common or black rhinoceros, the latter of which is still fairly common in many parts of the eastern and central regions of the continent. The white rhinoceros, which had always, apparently, a much more restricted habitat, is now, on the contrary, close upon the verge of extinction.

THE WHITE RHINOCEROS (*Rhinoceros simus*), *Chukuru* of the Bechuanas, *Umhobo* of the Matabele, sometimes called Burchell's, or the square-mouthed rhinoceros, is,—one may almost say was,—next to the

elephant, the largest of all the land mammals of Africa. Standing as much as 6 feet 6 inches in height at the withers, it measured in extreme length fully 16 or 17 feet. It was almost purely a grass feeder, and instead of having the prehensile upper lip, so characteristic of the bush-feeding black rhinoceros, the white rhinoceros was distinguished by a square blunt-lipped muzzle. The head was enormously large and unwieldy-looking, with the small eye set very far down towards the nostrils. The fore-horn was always much longer, and therefore much more prized by natives, than that of the common rhinoceros. In the good days, sixty years ago, when these beasts were common everywhere between the Molopo river and the Zambesi, some enormously long fore-horns were to be obtained as trophies. Native chiefs had them pared down and shaped into staffs and knobkerries, the finest of which were highly treasured. The longest recorded measurement of a white rhinoceros horn is 5 feet  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches. This magnificent specimen was brought to England by the renowned hunter Roualeyn Gordon-Cumming, and is now in the possession of Colonel W. Gordon-Cumming. In colour the white rhinoceros varied very little from the hue of the so-called black rhinoceros—a kind of dirty, brownish drab. How the animal came to get its name is difficult to understand. Possibly some early Boer hunter may have come across and slain one of these animals after it had been rolling in light-coloured mud, and so christened it forthwith *Wit Rhinoster*. Anyhow, the name was

undoubtedly given to it by some Dutch colonist, and the beast will continue to be called the white rhinoceros long after it has been exterminated from the face of Africa.

The habitat of these animals was, as I have said, a restricted one. Within the last 150 years, at all events, they were, until quite recently, found only in the wide countries between the Orange and a line formed by the Cunene and Zambesi rivers. A few years since it was rumoured that some animal bearing a strong resemblance to this rhinoceros had been met with in Central Africa. This suspicion has been verified; Africa is always full of surprises; and a fresh find of the white rhinoceros has come to light in the regions about Lado, on the White Nile.

The white rhinoceros was sluggish in disposition, sleeping much by day, drinking towards dusk or the early part of the night, beginning to feed towards afternoon, grazing its way towards water, and continuing to eat during the night and early morning. Many a rhinoceros has been shot while recumbent and fast asleep in some shady part of the veldt during the heat of the day. These animals (of either species) are, however, nearly always attended by the well-known rhinoceros birds,—usually the *Buphaga erythorhynca*, a species of starling,—and, thanks to the vigilance of these friends, the approach of the hunter is often detected, and the great beast moves off and escapes. Possessing excellent powers of scent, the white rhinoceros had peculiarly poor sight, so much

so that the sportsman might, and often did, completely escape its observation, while standing or lying motionless, even although the great creature passed within a dozen yards. These animals were extremely shy and inoffensive, and unless absolutely attacked would nearly always run the instant they got wind of a human being. A shot well planted through heart or both lungs would usually account for a white rhinoceros pretty quickly, but if not well hit they would run for miles and probably escape. From its enormous bulk and weight, a heavy bullet, from a .4- to .8-bore, was usually deemed necessary in attacking this game; but the powerful modern weapons now in use, a .400 or .450, using smokeless powder, and a solid bullet of not less than 480 grains, would be quite sufficient to achieve the downfall even of so mighty a quadruped.

Occasionally the white rhinoceros, inoffensive and retiring though it was upon most occasions, would, when wounded or worried by hunters, turn upon them. Oswell was once hunting one of these animals in Bechuanaland, and had severely wounded it. His horse took fright and refused to stir, and the huge beast, walking quietly up, thrust its long fore-horn clean through it, and tossed both horse and rider into the air, killing the one and severely hurting the other. Mr. W. Finaughty, a great Matabelerland hunter in the old days, was also badly injured by one of these rhinoceroses in the Mashona country, about a generation since, and other serious and even fatal accidents have occurred with these animals.



The white rhinoceros, although normally a sluggish and unwieldy beast, could, when alarmed or excited, run with extraordinary speed. Its trot was a fast one, but when it broke into a gallop it required a good horse to run up to it. The female of this species had a curious trick of keeping her calf running, when danger threatened, just in front of her huge snout, guiding it at the same time with wonderful dexterity by means of her fore-horn.

The numbers of these great creatures slain by the hunters of from thirty to sixty years ago is almost incredible. Oswell and Vardon shot eighty-nine rhinoceroses, many of them the white species, in one season. C. J. Andersson killed to his own rifle some sixty of them during a season in South-West Africa. They were shot in those days in large numbers by hunters lying out at night watching the desert watering-places. As many as eight of these huge creatures would be butchered, by a single gunner during a night's shooting. It was a shocking waste of life, and by the year 1885 the slaughter had begun to have its inevitable effect, for rhinoceroses seem always to have been slow-breeding creatures.

The flesh of this rhinoceros was looked upon by all South African hunters as extremely good. Selous, a discriminating critic, speaks of it in terms of high approval. The hump, cut off and roasted in the skin in an ant-hill oven or a hole in the ground, was the prime portion of the beast. At the end of the rainy season, about March, the great creatures were at their best and fattest; but the white rhinoceros always

carried much more flesh and fat than its ill-conditioned congener.

Until within the last ten years very few specimens of this almost extinct creature were to be found in European collections. Happily some fine examples have been secured by Mr. Coryndon and Mr. Varndell, and are to be seen at the Natural History Museum, Mr. Walter Rothschild's Museum at Tring, in Hertfordshire, and at the Cape Town Museum. At the present time a few of these gigantic mammals still linger in North-East Mashonaland. In Zululand, about the dense reed-beds and coverts at the junction of the Black and White Umvolosi rivers, and probably in one or two parts of South-East Africa they are still to be found.

THE BLACK RHINOCEROS (*Rhinoceros bicornis*) is, as I have said, the common rhinoceros of Africa, and has a very wide distribution. Its most northerly limit is now probably in the region south-east of Kassala, where I believe these animals are still found. From there southward it ranges as far as North Mashonaland and Matabeleland, along the Zambesi valley, and in Portuguese South-East Africa, where it is, however, from much persecution, becoming scarce. It is probably most abundant at the present day in the little-known regions between Gallaland and the Nile, and in the less explored parts of Uganda and British East Africa. It occurs sparingly in the Portuguese province of Angola, but in West Africa, north of the Equator, it seems to be entirely lacking.



BLACK RHINOCEROS.



ON SENTRY OVER THE DEAD.

Known to the Boers as *Zwart rhinoster*, it is called by the Abyssinians *Orarisse*, by the Swahilis of East Africa *Faru*, by the Somalis *Weel*, by the Zulus and Matabele *Upejana* and *Umpeygan*, and by the Bechuanas *Borele* and *Keitloa*.

It used to be supposed that different species or sub-species of the black rhinoceros existed. This idea has long since been exploded, and it is now well ascertained that, although slight variation in the shape and length of the horns may occur, only one species of the common rhinoceros is found throughout the length and breadth of Africa.

The black rhinoceros stands, in occasional specimens, as much as 5 feet 8 inches at the shoulder,—taken in a straight line,—but average examples reach little more than 5 feet 2 inches. In East Africa the species seems to be somewhat less in stature than in those found farther south. The fore-horn is usually, as in the case of the white rhinoceros, much longer than the posterior horn; but even in the days when these animals were as plentiful as pigs—as they actually were in places—the fore-horns never attained the magnificent proportions of those of the white rhinoceros. The finest horn recorded from South Africa<sup>1</sup> measures 3 feet 5 inches in length; another horn from East Africa reaches 3 feet 8 inches. To outsiders it seems difficult to account for the great demand that existed and still exists for rhinoceros horns—a demand far exceeding the requirements of the ordinary trophy hunter or collector.

<sup>1</sup> *Records of Big Game*, Rowland Ward and Co.

It is probable that a very large proportion of African rhinoceros horns are exported to China, where, ground up into powder, they are eagerly purchased as medicine for various ailments.

The black rhinoceros spends its day very much as did its white congener, and has much the same characteristics. It sleeps during the hot hours, usually in thick bush or beneath a spreading tree, but occasionally in the full blaze of the sun, upon an open plain, with its head pointing down-wind. Waking towards afternoon, it feeds to its watering-place; after drinking, between 6 and 10 p.m., it browses away again to its feeding-grounds till about 9 o'clock a.m., when it seeks repose. Its hearing and smell are acute, but its sight is extremely poor, so poor that it will pass a man within a score of yards without apparently making him out at all. As its prehensile upper lip indicates, it browses chiefly among bush, plucking its sustenance from various astringent shrubs and the foliage of the various bush acacias. It devours, too, certain plants that grow upon the great grass plains. It has a most singular habit of depositing its dung in a hollow which it scoops out for the purpose, but scatters it about thereafter with its horn and nose, ploughing up deep furrows as it does so. The white rhinoceros never seems to have indulged in this practice. The black rhinoceros lies with its back to the wind and, so soon as it gets a whiff of anything that it deems suspicious, sets off at a sharp trot. When charging, or making off at its best pace, it runs at a clumsy, bounding

canter, which is sufficiently fast to make a good horse gallop its hardest.

This rhinoceros is not a difficult beast to kill, and, if approached up-wind during the daytime, may often be despatched with a single bullet. Unless hit, however, through the heart, vertebra (the neck shot is a very good one), brain, or both lungs, the beast will go on everlastingly and make good its escape. If the brain is aimed for, the bullet should be planted between the ear and the eye, a few inches behind the eye. Even when severely wounded the black rhinoceros will, if the hunter stands perfectly still, unless it gets his wind, pass him within less than twenty yards. There is, I think, little doubt that this rhinoceros is, on the whole, a more irritable and savage beast than its white congener. Many accidents, some fatal, have happened with it. Some of these accidents may have been the result of pure mischance. As, for example, when a black rhinoceros in East Africa, getting the wind of a passing caravan, may in its headlong course, without meaning a direct charge, blunder right through the line of men, upsetting and even injuring some. There is a ludicrous account of such a charge in one of the quaint chronicles of the old Cape commanders, which relates how Governor Simon Van der Stell, on an expedition up country in 1685, was, with his waggons and retinue, charged furiously by one of these animals and much damage inflicted.

Some writers and hunters speak of this rhinoceros as if it were a comparatively harmless beast ;

but the sportsman, unused to the habits of this kind of game, would do well not to attempt to take any liberties with it. There have been many accidents from the charge of the black rhinoceros. Oswell, for example, who had a serious mishap with a white rhinoceros, was nearly finished off altogether by one of the black species. The great beast came close upon him, as he lay in the grass, and he had to run. He was chased, tossed high into the air, and so severely wounded in the thigh as to be crippled for some time. One of Mr. C. V. A. Peel's Somali hunters was tossed in Somaliland, a few years since, but escaped with his life. A native, hunting with C. J. Andersson towards the Okavango, was, as he lay concealed by a tuft of bush, slain with a single lightning-like stroke of a black rhinoceros's horn, his skull being cleft, and his brains scattered on the soil. And many other serious and even fatal mishaps have taken place in Africa from the charge or attack of this rhinoceros. It is, however, consoling to remember that if the first charge of the beast can be dodged or avoided, he commonly blunders straight on and returns no more. In nineteen cases out of twenty it may be said that the sportsman will safely bag his rhino without much trouble or difficulty. But in the twentieth he may meet with an irascible, troublesome beast which may give him some very uncomfortable moments.

If it were not for the rhinoceros birds which are so frequently found in attendance on this animal, the rhinoceros would be much more often surprised at





A RHINO WITH A 27-INCH HORN.

CHARGING.



its siesta than it is. These birds are, as I have said, members of the great starling family—a family famous for its attendance upon animals. Greyish brown in colour, with ferruginous tail feathers and pale fulvous breast, rump, and under-parts, they have orange-coloured bills with red tips. Their claws are extraordinarily developed, manifestly for the purpose of hanging on to the skin of an animal in any position and at almost any angle. They have an extraordinary liking for various kinds of animals, notably domestic cattle, wild buffalo, and rhinoceros. They are most frequent attendants upon rhinos in all parts of Africa, freeing their big friends of ticks and other insects, and are invariably sure of a welcome. In return for the friendship extended to them, they warn the rhinoceros of the approach of danger, flying into the air restlessly above the animal's head, and uttering shrill cries. The rhinoceros knows at once what these warnings portend, and usually makes off at a good pace. It is not, however, invariably attended by these birds, and the gunner, especially on a hot day, may be able to approach, even upon a wide, open grass plain, without the least difficulty, and get his shot within twenty yards. A man must, of course, be sure of himself and his shooting in such a situation.

The amount of black rhinoceroses slain during the last fifty years in Africa must have been enormous. In South Africa, between 1840 and 1880, they were shot by thousands. In East Africa, where they are still abundant, the earlier hunters of the middle

'eighties shot very large numbers of them. Sir John Willoughby, Sir Robert Harvey, and two friends, bagged in their expedition, made in the year 1886, as many as fifty of these animals. All this seems rather senseless slaughter; there were no fine trophies to be acquired; and the sportsman seems usually to have shot for the mere purpose of killing. It was, until quite recently, supposed that none but weapons of heavy calibre were fitted for attacking this huge mammal. Mr. Selous and others have exploded that theory, and still more lately Mr. Neumann has proved that even so slender a missile as the .303 bullet (the solid military pattern) is quite sufficient to account for these animals. Many sportsmen of great experience still hold, however, with the larger bores and a heavy bullet of great smashing power. A double 8-bore of the Paradox type is a first-rate weapon for this kind of game. A still more preferable arm, in the writer's opinion, would be one of the latest .450 rifles, burning cordite powder and delivering with the solid bullet a blow of enormous striking force. A double barrel of this kind is, in my opinion, an ideal weapon for all kinds of heavy game. For rhinoceros, which are extremely thick-skinned beasts, the bullets should be slightly hardened.

In Somaliland and Abyssinia, and among Soudan Arabs, the hide is in much request for the purpose of making shields. As many as fifteen to thirty fighting shields can be cut from a single rhino skin. In Abyssinia, only the men of higher importance are

allowed to be in possession of rhinoceros horns. From these sword handles and drinking cups are manufactured. The cups thus made are popularly supposed to detect the presence, or neutralise the effect of poison poured into them. This is a very ancient, but, of course, utterly baseless superstition, which obtains still in India, and was not unknown in Italy and other countries of Europe during the Middle Ages.

## THE HIPPOPOTAMUS

Hippopotami are still found in most rivers of the African interior. A few schools still linger in the Orange River, in that wild and almost unknown western region, never yet explored by the white man, where for more than three hundred miles the great river, running seawards, below the Augrabies Falls, is shut in by vast mountain cliffs, which render it almost completely inaccessible to the human eye. A few yet remain in the eastern reaches of the Limpopo river. Beyond the Limpopo they are found in some few rivers of South-Eastern Africa, including the Busi, Pungwe, and others. From the Shiré and Zambesi, northwards to the Upper Nile waters and the rivers and lakes of Abyssinia, these unwieldy monsters are to be met with in most parts of Africa in more or less abundance. I found them on the Botletli river, Ngamiland, in 1890, and they are still to be met with in that river, in the Chobi, the Okavango, the Cunene, and other systems of South, Central, and

South-West Africa. From Angola they may be found in nearly all rivers right through Western Africa as far north as Gambia. The lakes and adjacent rivers of Equatorial Africa still hold very large numbers of these huge amphibians, and it will be many a long year before the last behemoth bathes his immense and unwieldy bulk in the waters of these regions.

The hippopotamus is a near relative of the swine, but, of course, distinguishable from these animals by many important characteristics. Its form and shape are too well known to need minute description. The huge, swollen, barrel-like body, the hideous head, cavernous mouth, vast square muzzle, slit-like nostrils, the short, stumpy legs, terminating in four toes, set in rounded hoofs, are familiar to most people who have been to the Zoological Gardens or glanced at the illustrations of a Natural History. The ears are small and erect, the eyes prominent, bulging from the plane of the face. The tail is small and laterally compressed. Prominent in either jaw are the great curved tusks, while from the lower jaw project straight forward the fine and rounded incisors. At one time the ivory of the hippopotamus was in great request among dentists for the manufacture of artificial teeth, and brought a good price. It is not now in so much demand, and the price has fallen. On the face, muzzle, neck, and tail are to be seen strong bristles, but with these exceptions the skin of the hippopotamus, which varies in its blotchy colouring from flesh hue and a bluish tint to dirty brown, is bare. Altogether the hippo, the undoubted



*HIPPO BASKING IN THE SUN.*



DEAD HIPPO BEING TOWED HOME.



behemoth of Scripture, is one of the strangest, crudest, and most monstrous looking of all the strange forms with which Africa is provided in the way of animal life. The creature seems to belong, even more than the elephant, the rhinoceros, and the crocodile, to some far remote era of time, and its presence in this modern age of steam and electricity offers one of the greatest incongruities possible to imagine. One associates the hippo with the Pharaohs, the Nile of 5000 years ago, and a yet more ancient world; it seems impossible to identify it with modern man and modern civilisation. Yet the thing is happening, and the old-world monster has become in many rivers and on many lakes of Africa perfectly familiar with the steam launch and the stern wheeler.

In spite of its monstrous shape and appearance, the hippopotamus is wonderfully fitted for its aquatic existence. The eyes and nostrils, set as they are in the highest portions of the head, enable the animal to see and breathe comfortably without exposing more than a minute portion of its bulk. Where it has reason to be yet more cautious, it shows no more than its nostrils, as it comes up for a brief space to take in air. And where it is persecuted in a narrow and deep river, where the gunner can shoot from either bank, it will conceal itself completely by lying sunk near the bottom, approaching some overhanging bushes occasionally, under cover of which it can take breath without being observed. Where it has reason to dread being shot at, the hippo will remain under

water for as much as five minutes without coming to the surface, but as a general rule it rises to take breath every two minutes, or rather less. Where these animals are undisturbed they remain floating upon the top of the water for hours together, their young often to be seen standing or resting upon the broad backs of their mothers.

On land hippos are far more active beasts than their cumbrous aspect would lead one to suppose. Nocturnal in their habits, they emerge from the water to feed after night has fallen, their sustenance consisting chiefly of grass and reeds; where native crops happen to be near, they have no objection to raiding these food supplies, and incur the bitter hatred of the unfortunate Africans by doing so. In these night journeys they travel long distances and exhibit considerable activity, climbing rocky hills and plunging through bush and jungle. When disturbed they can gallop at quite a good pace. Occasionally, as will sometimes happen, the river in which they are located dries up or becomes much reduced, and they will, in such a case, undertake a land journey of a night and day, or even more, if necessary, in search of fresh waters. In their own element they are first-rate swimmers, and can usually travel at the ordinary pace of a native canoe. Occasionally they go out to the salt water, and will even move for a short distance by sea from one river mouth to another. Where they have not been disturbed by fire-arms, hippos may be seen in troops of from half a dozen to as many as twenty or thirty, and in a stretch of

two or three miles of river two or three hundred may be encountered in different schools. They are by no means amiable animals, especially when they have been hunted or shot at, and many fatal accidents happen with them. On the Botletli—a broad and deep river—I found natives extremely chary of going near them in their frail dug-out canoes, and, so far from thinking of attacking these animals in mid-stream, they allow strong schools of them to go up and down to and from Lake Ngami without attempting to molest them. On a narrow river, however, they are easily shot, and in many parts of Mashonaland, since Lobengula's overthrow, hippopotami have been exterminated by the hundred without difficulty. Even in rivers where they are little molested hippo will occasionally attack and overturn a canoe in sheer wantonness; with their cavernous mouths and huge teeth they are most formidable monsters, and one of these animals has been known to sever a man in half without difficulty.

From the point of view of the sportsman, hippo shooting is of little account, after the first novelty has worn off. On land they are, of course, easily disposed of by a shot in the heart or lungs. In the water, when a very small portion of the head is usually exposed, some skill in shooting is necessary. A bullet between the eyes, or between the eye and the ear, or in the eye alone, or behind the ear, or at the back of the head, planted between the ears, will usually reach the brain. Mr. Neumann once shot four of these monsters with the .303 in four con-

secutive shots, and Mr. F. J. Jackson has secured as many as nine in ten shots. When the brain is pierced, the beast sinks at once, and the hunter must wait for some hours before the body rises and floats. The time depends, of course, much upon the temperature of the water. If the river is warm the body may float in about three hours ; if cold, it may take twice as long.

The flesh of the hippo is dark red in colour, while the flavour may be described as that of beef, with a suggestion of pork, if such a thing could be imagined. When fat and in good condition, the meat of a young cow is excellent eating. The hide of these beasts, which attains as much as two inches in thickness, is in great demand, chiefly for the manufacture of the whips (sjamboks and koorbatches) of South and North Africa. The fat is highly prized, and the Boers salt down the meat and make a kind of coarse bacon of it. The South African Dutch name for the hippopotamus is *zee-koe*, and the animal is known as sea-cow by all white men from the Cape to the Zambesi. The Zulu, Matabele, and Zwazi name is *imvubu*, the Bechuana name *kubu*, while the Swahilis know the animal as *kiboko*, the Gallas as *robi*, and the Abyssinians as *kumare*. A fair-sized hippo bull will stand about 4 feet at the shoulder, and measure from 14 to 15 feet in length. The tusks of old bulls attain occasionally enormous dimensions. One from Nyasaland, in the possession of Major P. W. Forbes, measures no less than 38 inches over the curve. Another fine tusk reaches  $37\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and has a



DEAD BHEMOTHS.



A HUNTER'S TENT.

circumference at base of  $8\frac{1}{4}$  inches. A good average pair will measure 2 feet 4 inches apiece, and weigh about 14 lbs. the pair. The weight of a fair-sized hippo would be about three tons.

### THE LIBERIAN HIPPOPOTAMUS

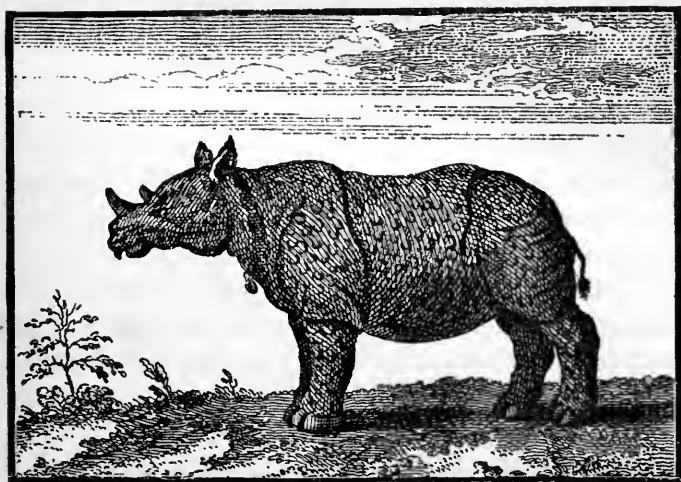
This pigmy hippo (*Hippopotamus liberiensis*), concerning which hitherto very little has been known, can scarcely be looked upon as a beast of chase likely to engage the attention of keen sportsmen. Even when encountered, it has little to recommend it save its rarity ; and, as a matter of fact, from the very restricted nature of its habitat, and for the reason that it is essentially a marsh and forest loving creature, apparently of nocturnal habits, it is but seldom encountered even by the natives of its own country. An adult will measure 2 feet 6 or 7 inches in height, and 3 feet 3 or 4 inches in length. In appearance this singular animal is an almost perfect miniature of his big relative. It is for its size extraordinarily strong, sturdy, and robust. In colour it is of a shining blue-black, with greenish tints, the under parts varying from grey-green to yellowish green. It is worthy of note that, unlike its big cousin, which sports four incisor tusks in the lower jaw, the Liberian hippo has only two. Its habits are far more like those of the wild swine than of the true hippo, wandering, as it does, in pairs, through forest and marsh over a wide extent of country. It seldom enters the rivers, except to bathe occasionally,

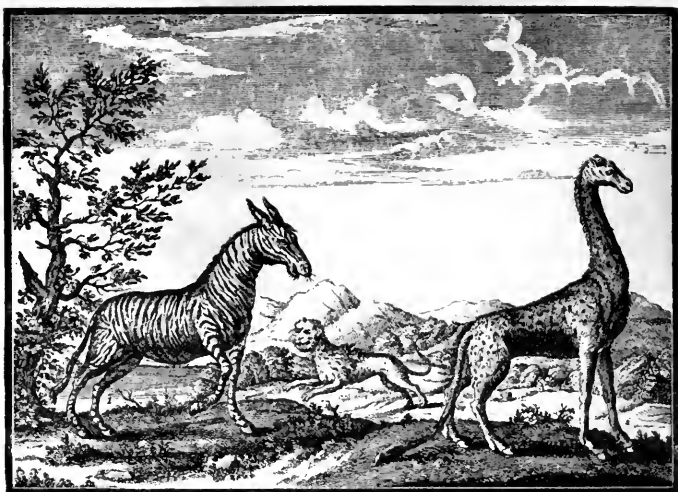
or to cross from one piece of country to another. The tender shoots of bushes and shrubs, grass, and fruit seem to form its main dietary. Hidden up during the day in some sheltered and secluded spot, it sleeps heavily, and is then to be easily approached. At all other times it is a most shy and wary beast. These animals are apparently not very numerous. Few, if any, Englishmen appear to have shot them, and they can scarcely be classed among the game animals likely to form interesting objects of sport. From their very rarity and singularity it is, however, possible that some enterprising Briton, finding himself in West Africa, may think it worth while to devote a few days or even a week or two to their pursuit. The flesh of these beasts is fairly good eating, that of the young ones being tender, well tasted, and in flavour somewhat like wild pig. The habitat of this pigmy hippo is Liberia and the adjacent regions of the West Coast ; but the interior of this country is so little known that the exact range of the animal is by no means clearly ascertained. The Liberian natives know it as the sea-cow or water-cow ; in their tongue *mali* or *vey*.

[The pachydermatous animals have been considered, for the purposes of these volumes, as if they were confined to Africa, though both elephants, of which Mr. Cumming takes some passing notice, and rhinoceros are found in various parts of Asia. The shooting of them, however, in Asia is not of any great importance, nor does it differ in any very interesting particular from their shooting in Africa,



where they are so much more generally recognised as objects of the sportsman's pursuit. Similarly, although the lion is represented in Asia also, as by the so-called black-maned lion of Guzerat, no particular account of his shooting in Asia has been given, as his numbers are so few and the sport claims so few followers. The same remark applies to one or two other species which are represented in more than one of the great continents. The wild boar, for instance, is an inhabitant both of Asia and of Europe, but its shooting has no particular points of interest in either continent, although pig-sticking is so fine and popular a sport.—ED.]





## CHAPTER IV

### THE ASSES AND ZEBRAS

By H. A. BRYDEN

#### WILD ASSES

ALTHOUGH wild asses are not animals that the sportsman proper, as distinguished from the sporting butcher, cares to shoot frequently, it is probable that upon first entering the parched and desert regions where these animals have their habitat, the gunner will, from very reasonable curiosity and the desire to collect a few specimens, like to bring to bag a head or two of these fleet and handsome beasts. The wild ass of the African plains is as unlike his poor down-trodden, domesticated relative as it is possible to imagine, and, rejoicing in his activity, speed, and

strength, is a beast of splendid port and magnificent action—courageous, high-bred, and enduring.

Two kinds of wild asses are now well recognised in the Soudan and North-East Africa, the Abyssinian species (*Equus asinus teniopus*) and the Somali wild ass (*Equus asinus somalicus*). Of these the Abyssinian ass is found in the desert regions of Abyssinia, Somaliland, Gallaland, the Soudan, Erythrea, and the Red Sea littoral generally. It is not apparently, identical with the Asiatic species, and has, among other varying characteristics, somewhat shorter ears, a shorter mane, and a thinner tail. Standing from thirteen to fourteen hands at the withers, this wild ass is a shapely, well-proportioned beast, creamy grey in colour, with white under parts and muzzle and a white patch under the throat. The shoulders are crossed with a dark-brown marking, and down the back runs a dark list. The legs are usually more or less barred with zebra-like markings, and are clean, hard, and shapely, the hoofs being small, beautifully shaped, and hard as flint.

The Somali wild ass, known to the Somalis as *Duber Dibhuded*, is found chiefly in the country from which it takes its name. It is an even finer-looking beast than the Abyssinian species. A good specimen stands as much as 14 hands and measures over 7 feet in length. The body colour is a beautiful French grey, the under parts clear white, as are the nose and a ring round the eyes. The mane is dark brown. There is no dorsal stripe, nor are the shoulders crossed, as in the case of most other asses. The legs are

white, very handsomely banded with irregular markings of dark brown. This truly noble-looking beast is more massive in form than the other wild asses, and next to the zebras is, beyond all doubt, by far the handsomest of the wild *Equidae*.

The African wild asses of either species drink always at night, returning to their grazing grounds long before dawn. They may be shot, like other animals, while drinking at their desert pools, if they are known to be in the vicinity, but they are among the most shy and wary of all animals. The average North African pony is by no means equal to the running down of either of these fleet and staying animals, and the gunner, if he desires to secure a specimen, must attain his object by stalking. The Soudanese Arabs are well aware of the galloping powers of the wild ass, and, if they wish to capture specimens, they achieve their purpose by running down the foals on fleet dromedaries. Occasionally a troop of wild asses will stand within a hundred yards, or even less, of the passing caravan, but these chances are rare, and the sportsman will seldom find himself able to approach within less distance than 250 or 300 yards. Like the zebras, the wild ass is not a difficult beast to bring down with the rifle, having much less tenacity of life than the antelopes; and a well-planted bullet behind the shoulder, or through the chest, if the animal is facing the stalker, will achieve its purpose. The 303, or Mannlicher, using expanding bullets, is a very suitable weapon for this kind of game.

## THE ZEBRAS

Zebras, despite their near relationship to the horse, have always been included among African game animals, and probably always will be. Their meat, a favourite food among Africans, is often necessary to the hunter's camp; the very handsomeness of their appearance attracts the sportsman, especially in his earlier days in Africa; the native gunner is always on their heels; and so, year in year out, the zebra especially of the species known as Burchell's, continues to be shot. Happily these animals, and the Grant's and Grévy's zebras are still abundant in various parts of South, Central, and East Africa, and are likely to withstand the assaults of gunners for a good many years to come.

Excluding the Quagga, which has now been for many years extinct, there are at the present time four well-defined groups of zebras to be found in Africa, viz.—the true or mountain zebra (*Equus zebra*), Burchell's zebra (*Equus burchelli*), Grévy's zebra (*Equus grévyi*), and Grant's zebra (*Equus granti*). The quagga (*Equus quagga*), which formerly abounded in very large numbers on the karroos of Cape Colony and the plains of the Orange Free State, was seldom found north of the Vaal River. This animal, which was mainly shot out by the skin-hunting Boers, became completely exterminated towards 1870, or at latest 1873. It differed from all the other members of the zebra race in being only striped upon the head

and shoulders, the markings disappearing towards the middle of the barrel.

The *Mountain zebra* is an animal of somewhat local distribution, whose chief habitat has always lain among the wild mountain ranges of Southern Africa. On the most inaccessible parts of these sierras, at altitudes varying from 2000 to 6000 feet, the mountain zebra makes its home. It is a short-legged, compact, strongly knit beast, standing about 12 or  $12\frac{1}{2}$  hands at the withers, and striped upon a silvery white or ochreous-white ground with black or blackish-brown markings. The stomach is pure white. The markings run down to the hoofs, the legs being very beautifully and evenly banded. The ears are long and the tail is more donkey-like than in the case of Burchell's zebra. These splendid equines are of extraordinarily active habits, galloping about the cliffs and roughest parts of the mountains they adorn, with a freedom and recklessness that seem positively astounding. I have watched them in their wild career in such habitats, with amazement and admiration. They are as sure-footed as goats and seldom if ever come to grief. Leopards occasionally take tribute from their foals, and in very severe frost and snow they will sometimes perish from cold upon the higher ranges. Otherwise they have only to fear the bullets of mankind. From much persecution, these animals have become very scarce, and in Cape Colony, where they yet linger in various ranges—notably the Zwartberg, Witteberg, Great Winterhoek, Tandtjesberg, and Sneeuwberg—they are now



BURCHELL'S ZEBRAS.



HERD OF GRANT'S ZEBRAS.



protected, and can only be shot by a permit from the Governor—a permit seldom if ever granted. It is possible that mountain zebras may yet be discovered in other less known parts of South Africa. A few years since Mr. G. W. Penrice came upon a new sub-species in the country behind Mossamedes, Portuguese West Africa, and procured specimens. This animal, now known as *Penrice's zebra*, has distinct affinities with the true mountain zebra, and although the dark markings are narrower and the white wider, and other slight distinctions exist, it is, I think, to be looked upon as a local race of the true zebra. Curiously enough, these zebras are not, in this part of Africa, found on the high mountains as in Cape Colony. They frequent, by preference, sometimes the maritime plains, close to the sea, at others the rough, kopje-strewn, grassy country, which lies between these plains and the Chella Range. These zebras are to be found in good numbers, and as at present very little is known about them, except from my friend Mr. Penrice's description, it would be no mere superfluous butchery if some sportsman, hunting in this part of South-West Africa, were to stalk and shoot a few good specimens and send the skins home for various museums. Hitherto only one example, that sent by Mr. Penrice, which is now in the Natural History Museum, has reached Europe. The Coroca river, east of Port Alexander, and the country behind Mossamedes are the localities where, hitherto, this zebra has been found. These animals were not difficult to approach, and six of them

were shot by Mr. Penrice within a range of 100 yards.

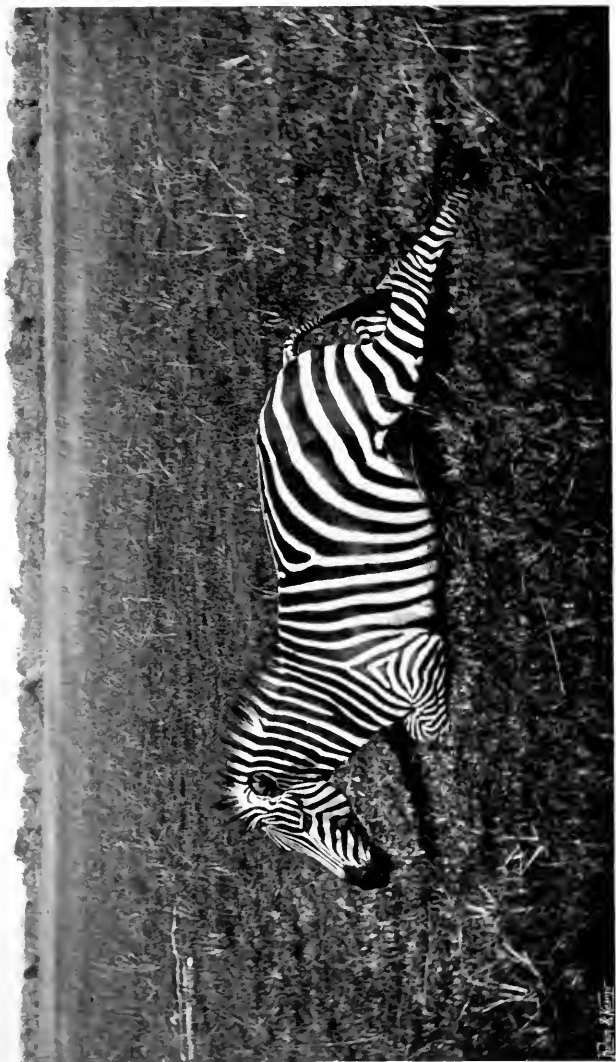
Another closely allied form is the *Kaokoland zebra*, a hill-frequenting zebra found in the Kaoko veldt, in Northern Damaraland, German South-West Africa. There can be little doubt that this animal is merely a local race of the mountain zebra. It exhibits practically the same markings and characteristics as the mountain zebra of Cape Colony.

*Grant's zebra*, the latest of all equine discoveries in Africa, seems to be a connecting link between the mountain and Burchell's zebra. Upon the whole, in its markings, tail, sturdy appearance, and general characteristics, especially in the very perfect banding of the legs, this fine animal seems to approach more nearly the mountain type than the zebra of the plains—Burchell's zebra. It comes from Abyssinia and the adjacent region, and the only specimen as yet known in this country was one presented in 1901 by King Menelik to King Edward. It is probably a northern variation of the true or mountain zebra of the south of Africa. Sportsmen travelling in Abyssinia will render good service to natural history if they can accurately locate this interesting species, and send home some skins. This can be done without any wasteful or wanton slaughter.

*Burchell's zebra*, which is by far the best known and most widely distributed of all the zebras, once ranged from the Orange River to East Africa. It is practically exterminated south of Khama's country

(North Bechuanaland) at the present day; but between that country and the north of British East Africa it may still be found ranging freely in large herds. It is familiar in Portuguese West Africa (Angola), but in this part of the continent is not, I believe, known north of the Equator. Many varieties are found in different localities, some quite unstriped about the legs, others faintly striped, others having markings more or less down to the fetlock. Some naturalists have tried to establish new species or sub-species from these variations. These attempts have not yet been received among field naturalists with great gratitude, nor are they fully recognised even among scientists. Burchell's zebra is more equine in type than either the mountain, Grant's, or even Grévy's zebra. It has much shorter ears, and a somewhat bushier and more horse-like tail. The banded mane comes well over the forehead. The stripings differ widely from those of the other zebras, especially in the characteristic shadow-markings found between the dark stripes. In a Central African variety, however, these shadow stripes are found lacking, although in other respects the animal is of the Burchell type. A good Burchell's zebra will stand as much as 13 hands, or a little more, at the withers. This animal runs in good-sized troops, numbering occasionally as many as a hundred, and is most usually to be found grazing on the plains in company with blue wildebeest, hartebeest, tsesseby, eland, buffalo, ostriches, and other game. Wherever blue wildebeest are to be found, there, as an almost invariable rule, you will find the Burchell's

zebra, the two species being usually upon very intimate terms. In parts of Africa, where they are still numerous, hundreds of these zebras may be seen grazing upon a single wide plain—a truly magnificent spectacle, interspersed as they are with other game. The flesh of this, as of other kinds of zebra, while unpalatable to Europeans, is in much esteem among natives. To the Englishman the rich, yellow fat and sweet flavour of the meat, added to the equine nature of the animal, are sufficient obstacles to an enjoyable meal, and the stomach usually rather rebels against this food. Such, at least, is my own experience, and that of many other white sportsmen in Africa. Burchell's zebra possesses good speed and staying power, and, as a general rule, can show its heels to a man mounted on an average South African pony. That, at all events, is my own opinion, and I have a good many times attempted to gallop down these beasts in fair tail-on-end chase. If one remembers that a 12-stone man in such a chase is encumbered with a rifle, water-bottle, field-glasses, cartridges, and other impedimenta, and that his nag has also to carry saddle and bridle, the whole weighing not less than 15 stone—probably nearer 16 stone—this is not surprising. It is an immense handicap. Yet my friend Selous tells me that on several occasions he has ridden his horse right up to and even through a troop of Burchell's zebra. The occasional superiority of the horse may therefore—for Mr. Selous' evidence is absolutely unimpeachable—be taken as fully established. Unencumbered by a rider, a decent South African pony would, un-



WOUNDED ZEBRA.



CAMPING AND COOKING OPERATIONS.

doubtedly, gallop down the fleetest Burchell's zebra that ever scoured the plains.

Where they have not been disturbed these zebras are tame and confiding, and will even approach within 50 yards to gaze at the sportsman and his equipment. Even where they have been hunted, one can usually get a shot within 200 or 250 yards. When flying from the mounted gunner these animals, when not too hardly pressed, will often wheel round, and, out of mere curiosity, stand and take stock of their pursuers. A shot is then to be easily obtained. Or they can be stalked by the dismounted gunner, just as can antelopes, where ant-heaps or bush offer shelter to the sportsman. The zebra is a soft animal compared with the antelopes, and a single bullet, decently placed, or a broken leg, will effectually bring it to earth, or to a standstill. A troop of Burchell's zebra is to my mind still one of the most beautiful sights in Africa, and the good sportsman will slay as few of these animals as possible.

*Grévy's zebra*, found in British East Africa, Gallaland, and the south-western interior of Somaliland, often ranging with the common Burchell's zebra, is undoubtedly the finest of all this group. A well-grown example will stand as much as 15 hands, and the species exceeds in stature all its congeners. The ears are of extraordinary size, but in spite of this the magnificent appearance of the animal is not to be denied. The stripings differ greatly from those of all other zebras, the dark and light markings being much narrower and of far more evenness in breadth.

These zebras were only discovered some twenty years since, the first example known to modern Europe having been sent in the year 1882 by the Negus Menelik, then King of Shoa, to President Grévy of the French Republic. They are now familiar to most sportsmen in British East Africa and Somaliland.

They run usually in troops ranging from seven or eight to as many as twenty or thirty. The country they frequent varies in different localities. Sometimes they are to be met with on low plateaux covered with scattered thornbush and tall feathery "durr" grass, with rocks outcropping here and there; at others on bare open plains and stony hills. When not persecuted by gunners they are tame and confiding beasts, and are easily shot, occasionally within a range of 50 yards. Zebras of all kinds, it may be noted, drink every day, and cannot, like many of the antelopes, exist long without water. They are in every part of Africa a very favourite prey of lions. The spoor of the big Grévy's zebra is far more horse-like than the donkey-like imprint of Burchell's and the mountain zebra.

Although Grévy's zebra has apparently only recently been discovered, there is a curious reference in a *History of Ethiopia*, published in 1682, to what is evidently the same animal. Here is the extract:—"But there is a beast which is called Zecora, which for beauty exceeds all the Four-footed Creatures in the World. They of Congo give it the name of Zebra. This creature is about the bigness of a Mule, and is brought out of the Woods



of Habessinia and the Countries possessed by the Golans, and easily tamed—a present of great esteem, and frequently given to the Kings of Habessinia. . . . His Ears are the only thing that disfigures him, being of a disproportionate length, for which reason he is call'd by the Portugals Burro do Matto (though improperly), the Wild Ass.”





## CHAPTER V

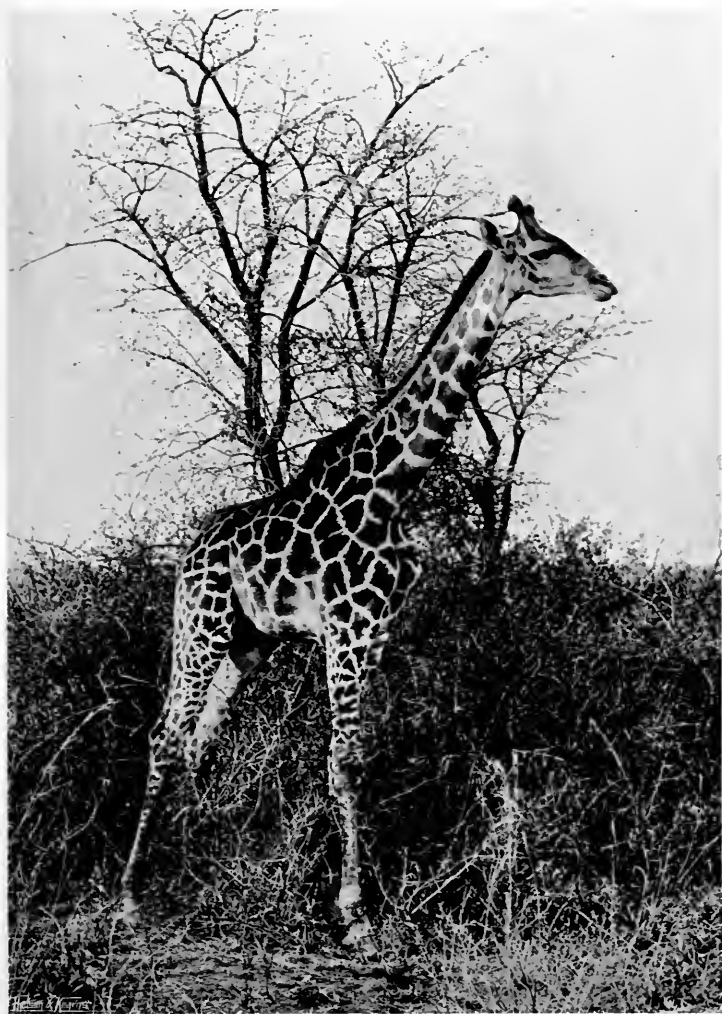
### THE GIRAFFE AND OKAPI

By H. A. BRYDEN

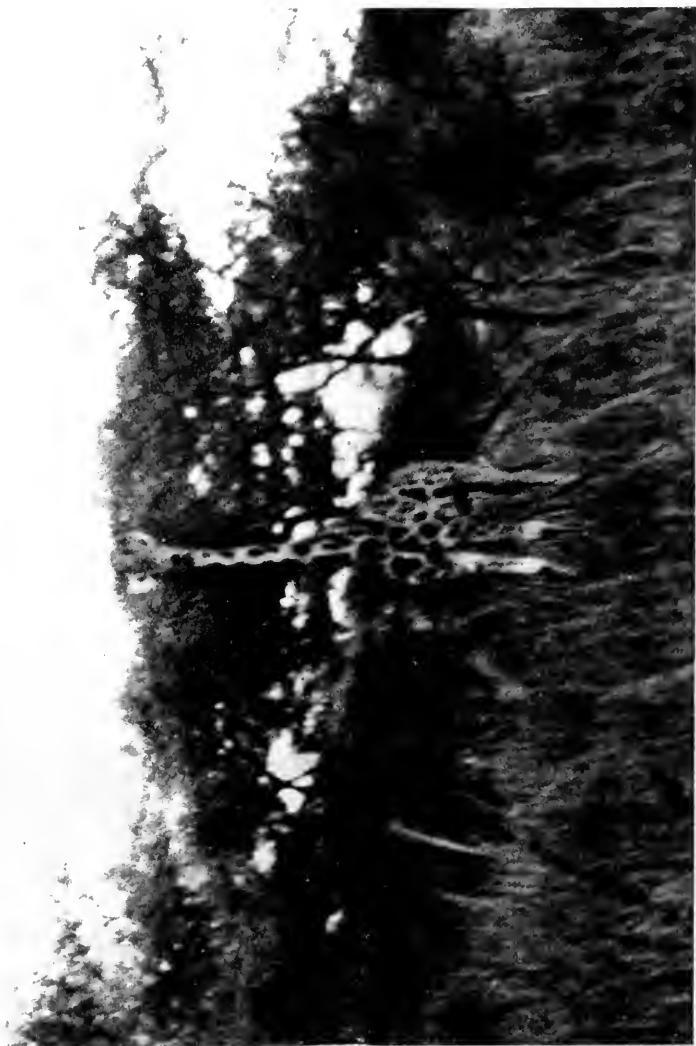
#### THE GIRAFFE

It was for years supposed that only one species of giraffe was to be found in all Africa. Recent discoveries and research have, however, revealed the fact that at least two or three races, possibly even more, are existent. These animals are now to be separated as follows :—

1. The Southern Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis capensis*).



*FEMALE GIRAFFE.*



YOUNG GIRAFFE—WHITE NILE COUNTRY.

2. The Northern Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis typica*).

3. The Somali Giraffe (*Giraffa reticulata*).<sup>1</sup>

Of these the two first forms are of the well-known blotched species, so long familiar to visitors at the Zoological Gardens. They are to be regarded as sub-species of the same race, and have strong points of resemblance. In the northern giraffe it is found that in addition to the pair of false horns rising in front of the ears, a third boss or horn is usually developed on the centre of the forehead, while occasionally other two horns are to be found rising behind the main pair, exactly between the ears. A head sent home by Sir Harry Johnston from Uganda, now in the Natural History Museum, shows very clearly the five distinct horns.<sup>2</sup> The Somali giraffe, although it may have been known ages ago in the Roman arena and at Roman triumphs, where giraffes were occasionally exhibited, was utterly unknown to modern hunters and modern scientists until the year 1893, when a specimen was shot by Major Wood and Captain Finch in the Aulihahn country, Somaliland. Other specimens of this giraffe have been since shot by Lord Delamere,

<sup>1</sup> Quite recently Mr. R. Lydekker, the well-known naturalist, has separated giraffes into two forms, the Netted or Somali giraffe, and the Blotched giraffe. Of the latter he gives ten sub-species or varieties, viz. the Nubian, Kordofan, South Lado, Baringo, Kilimanjaro, Congo, Angola, North Transvaal, Cape, and Nigerian. The last word on this difficult question has, however, by no means yet been said, nor can it be until considerably more material has been gathered.

<sup>2</sup> In one specimen recently brought home by Major Powell-Cotton, and named by Mr. Lydekker the South Lado giraffe, a sixth boss or false horn appears over the right eye, projecting horizontally.

Mr. A. H. Neumann, and other sportsmen. The range of these giraffes extends from Somaliland south-west as far as the neighbourhood of Lake Rudolf, and Mr. Neumann seems to think that the Tana river, from the sea as far as Mount Kenia, may be taken roughly as the limit of their southern range. At present, however, the exact distribution of this fine species is uncertain. It is remarkable that in this form the third horn on the middle of the brow is also developed, while in old bulls five horns often appear. This seems to be a marked peculiarity of both the northern giraffes. In the southern or Cape species I have never heard or known of an instance of this third horn being met with, although a round boss or bony protuberance on the brow is to be found more or less developed.

The coloration and marking of the Somali giraffe is absolutely different from that of the two other giraffes already spoken of. In place of the familiar blotches, yellow, or rufous, or dark brown on a creamy ground, the whole body-colouring of this species is of a bright chestnut, separated by a network of fine white lines, which mark off the ground colour into polygonal patches. The effect is most striking. So fine are the white lines and so close is the body-colouring that, viewed from a comparatively short distance, this giraffe would appear to be of one entire reddish chestnut hue. The interior of Somaliland, the Galla country, and the northern portion of British East Africa, may be said to form the present known limits of this giraffe.

A fourth species or sub-species of giraffe has

been described by Mr. Oldfield Thomas of the British Museum.<sup>1</sup> This species, known as *Giraffa camelopardalis peralta*, was shot at the junction of the Benue and Niger rivers—a locality where these animals were previously unknown—by the late Lieut. R. Hume-M'Quorquodale in 1897. Only the skull and anterior cannon bones of this giraffe reached England, and without further evidence it is difficult to say that this species can be regarded as a true one.<sup>2</sup> German naturalists have separated as new species two other forms of giraffe—one from Lake Iassa, the other from the Kilimanjaro district in German East Africa. These appear to be merely local varieties, connecting the northern and southern forms of the common or blotched giraffe, and can hardly be looked upon as anything more than subspecies. They have been dignified respectively by the titles *Giraffa tippelskirchi* and *Giraffa schillingsi*.

Giraffes, as I have said, were known to the Romans, from whom they took their designation *camelopardalis*. Except upon one or two occasions, they were thereafter completely forgotten and lost sight of until the close of the eighteenth century. Lorenzo de Medici exhibited one of these animals at Florence during the latter part of the seventeenth century; but otherwise the animal remained unknown until 1773, when Colonel Gordon, a Scottish officer in the

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the Zoological Society*, 1898, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> The skin of a head and neck of this giraffe have, since this was written, been added to the collection in the Natural History Museum. This has all the appearance of a very pale specimen of the old Nubian giraffes, long familiar at the Zoological Gardens.

service of the Dutch East India Company, at the Cape, crossed the Orange River and, just beyond the northern shore, in the country now known as Great Namaqualand, shot one of these animals, the skin of which was preserved and brought to Europe. Since this discovery the animal has become familiar to English and Dutch hunters. In the Soudan regions the Arabs, as long as they have possessed horses, have no doubt hunted these tall quadrupeds from the saddle, and the wild Hamran sword hunters, so well described by Sir Samuel Baker in his *Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia*, were able to run into and hamstring them with sharp and heavy swords, just as they did the elephant and the rhinoceros.

Giraffe hunting on horseback has, among South African sportsmen, always been regarded as one of the most fascinating of all pursuits. It has, as I can testify, a wonderful charm of its own, and the first sight of a troop of these strange, gigantic, and beautifully-coloured beasts browsing in their native forests, and the subsequent headlong gallop of several miles over rough and diversified country, often through thorn-bush and jungle of the most severe description, combine to render the running down and shooting of one of these animals one of the most thrilling and exciting experiences in the world. There is nothing else like it. Neither fox-hunting nor the chase of eland, gemsbok, brindled gnu, or other large antelopes, can be at all compared with it. Giraffe hunting is unique, and stands easily first in all forms of the chase where



speed, judgment of pace, riding capacity, and an eye for country have to be employed.

Giraffes in their quieter paces, striding quietly about their native forests, or moving from one feeding-ground to another, seem to progress at no very great rate of speed. Even when they have discovered the hunter's proximity, and begin to shuffle off with those long, easy strides of theirs, the newcomer into their country is inclined to greatly misjudge their pace. Yet even at this quiet, shuffling walk they are, with those long, stilt-like legs of theirs, going far faster than they appear to be, and the mounted man, setting his horse to a canter, finds himself even then not gaining upon them. Now he puts in spurs and forces his pony to the gallop, and the giraffes in their turn begin to put on steam; quitting their fast, striding walk, they break into a strange, cumbersome, bounding gallop, in which the hind legs are widely extended, the long neck swings up and down like a pendulum; the thick, black tail, twisted up over the stern, switches rapidly round and round; and the tall form rocks and sways in a manner that reminds one irresistibly of a ship labouring upon a heavy sea. The spectacle is an extraordinary one, even if only a small troop—say six or eight—is in front of the rider. Big troops are not often met with in these days; but I remember once in the Northern Kalahari having a herd of nineteen of these great creatures flying thus in front of myself and my native after-rider, and the sight was truly

a wonderful one. Whether the giraffes run across open plains, a thing they can seldom be forced into, or through thin forest or denser thorn-bush, the sportsman must now make up his mind to ride his very hardest, and, pressing his pony with spur and sjambok to the top of its speed, force the giraffe beyond their pace at the outset of the hunt. This is the only way to run them down and secure a shot. At their own pace, the pace of a hand gallop, they will run for miles and outstay the hunter. Forced beyond their speed in the first two or three miles of chase, they tire, the hunter gets close up to the stern of the beast he has singled out, and firing from the saddle at a few yards' distance, brings down his game. A solid bullet, planted somewhere about the root of the tail, will easily achieve its purpose ; the giraffe's body is short, and the missile penetrates easily to the heart and lungs. Or, if a leg be broken, the tall beast is at once disabled, and, trying to stagger on in its headlong flight, usually topples over and falls a victim.

The hunter should remember not to ride too close up to his quarry's hind legs or it may chance that the flying beast may unwittingly deal him or his horse a crushing kick from those wide-straddling limbs. In the same way he should be careful not to ride too near to a wounded giraffe, which, suddenly succumbing to its hurts, may fall crashing upon top of him. As a well-grown giraffe weighs about a ton, such a fall, as may readily be supposed, might have dangerous effects. The giraffe is practically defenceless, but it should be remembered that

it can, and does, chop out dangerously with its fore feet, and a wounded animal, although standing apparently helpless, is not therefore to be too closely approached. In comparatively open country, such a chase as I have attempted to describe may last from two to five miles, but nowadays, at all events, giraffe are much more chary of crossing open plains than they used to be fifty or sixty years ago. Only once have I had the good fortune to force part of a troop into fairly open ground. It was a thrilling experience, the subsequent run up was a magnificent one, and the whole incident is indelibly imprinted upon my memory.

Possessing, as it does, a tough hide, often as much as an inch in thickness, the giraffe fears none of those frightful thorns which render a gallop through African bush such a terror to the pursuing sportsman. These animals usually, therefore, if anywhere near such thickets, make in that direction, bursting through the densest and thorniest masses with perfect ease, but leaving for the hunter in their rear a sufficiently trying task. In the excitement of the chase the sportsman usually forgets these terrors, but he will probably find himself, having run up and brought down his game, sadly torn and ripped, his breeches and coat irretrievably damaged. A stout cord coat is absolutely necessary when hunting these animals in thick bush. One of the prettiest phases of giraffe hunting is when the chase leads through thin forest country, usually of giraffe acacia or the bifid-leaved mopani. Then the giant game can be

fairly well kept in view, and their beautiful tactics of retreat admired, especially the grace and ease with which they duck their long necks beneath obstructing branches, and tack this way and that, sheering easily round the boles of the thicker timber. Some hunters, in place of running right up to the heels of the giraffe they may have singled out, and, dropping their reins, firing from the saddle, prefer to jump off when within a hundred yards and take their shot from the ground. Personally I prefer the former system, which I have found an excellent one.

In East and most parts of Central Africa, where giraffe are to be found, horses cannot often be employed, and the hunter must secure his game on foot. Stalking is a much more difficult process than hunting giraffe on horseback; the sportsman is then placed at considerable disadvantage, and the giraffe, from his towering height, its keen eyesight, and its delicate sense of smell, is more often than not able to elude its pursuer. Still, giraffes are stalked in this manner. It is possible, I think, that, on the western borders of Abyssinia, where Baker hunted with horses forty or fifty years ago, Somali ponies could be well employed even at the present day. When spooring giraffe in bush and forest country a very sharp look-out must be kept. It is astonishing to see how keenly awake even the hawk-eyed natives are on such occasions. Giraffes stand often completely motionless, and the long neck is more often than not mistaken for some limb of a neighbouring tree; the play of light and shadow through the

foliage also renders the blotched body of the animal very difficult to make out. The giraffe, in fact, assimilates wonderfully with its forest surroundings.

In South Africa, at all events, these animals range very far from water, and hunting becomes yearly more difficult as the animals decrease in number. In the Northern Kalahari, where I have had experience of them, they certainly exist without drinking for six or seven months at a stretch—that is, in the dry season, from April to the end of October. This faculty they share with other desert-loving game, such as eland, gemsbok, hartebeest, and springbuck. In countries where water is to be found, however, giraffe drink periodically. In South Africa, the northern portion of the Kalahari is now one of the last strongholds of these animals. They are fairly common in the hinterland of Angola, as also in German and British East Africa, Somaliland, Gallaland, the country between Abyssinia and the Nile, and parts of the Soudan. They prefer dry country and are seldom found near swamps and low-lying districts. A .450 or .400 rifle is an excellent weapon for these animals. By the stalker on foot they can be secured readily enough with the .303 even.

A full-grown giraffe bull will measure as much as 19 feet in height, a mature cow reaching 17 feet. The coloration of the common or blotched species varies a good deal, and in a single troop animals may be noted ranging from lemon-fawn, through orange-tawny, to dark chestnut. The older animals, especially the bulls, become very dark with age, almost black

upon the back and shoulders. The flesh of a youngish, well-grown cow, fat and in good condition, is first-rate eating, tasting like good veal with a distinctly game-like flavour. The bulls become very strong with age, and the flesh is quite uneatable by Europeans. All these animals have a strong musk-like scent, and a horse unused to them is often so scared as to bolt clean away from the pursuit.

The enormous marrow bones of a giraffe are *the* luxury of South African hunters, and, roasted over a fire of embers, and sawn in half, form a *bonne bouche* fit to be set before princes. The skin of this animal is in great demand all over Africa. Natives use it largely for making sandals, and in South Africa, even far up country, £4 or £5 is readily obtainable for a good hide, which cuts up into scores of sjamboks and the thongs of waggon whips. It is an unfortunate fact that hundreds of giraffes are annually slaughtered for these base purposes.

I have touched upon the methods of hunting these animals, but it ought always to be remembered by every true sportsman that these rare and beautiful creatures are becoming year by year more scarce in Africa, and in due process of time must, it is to be feared, become extinct. It may be necessary to procure specimens now and again, or to obtain a supply of absolutely necessary meat for the camp; beyond these requirements giraffe ought to be shot in very sparing fashion. After the keen excitement of the first few days' sport with these animals—and I am bound to say that a giraffe hunt on horseback is one

of the most stirring sensations in the world—the hunter may well stay his hand, and let the beautiful giants go unscathed. It may be noted as a most singular fact that giraffes are voiceless, incapable of uttering a sound even in the agonies of death. Although not distantly related to the deer family—Rütimeyer, the Swiss naturalist, has well called them “a most fantastic form of deer”—the giraffe has no false hoofs. The hoof itself is somewhat ox-like, but very elongate. The spoor of a well-grown specimen is enormous, and will measure about a foot in length.

The Boers invariably call this animal *kameel* (the camel), and by the name “camel” all English hunters in the South African interior also know the animal. It is worth noting, by the way, that the giraffe progresses, just as does the camel, by moving both legs on either side of the body simultaneously, in contradistinction to the gait of nearly all other quadrupeds. The Bechuana name for the giraffe is *Tutla* (pronounced tootla); the Matabele and Zulus call it *Ntutla*; the Hottentots, *Naip*; the Masarwa Bushmen, *Ng'habe*; the Swahili of East Africa, *Twiga*; the Masai, *Oladogaragat*; the Wandorobo, *Njangitomara*; the Somalis, *Géri*.

### THE OKAPI

No account of modern African game would be complete without some reference to that extraordinary beast, the newly discovered Okapi (*Okapia johnstoni*), which has been accorded the honour of being placed

in a genus of its own. The specimen sent home in 1901 by Sir Harry Johnston, now set up and to be seen in the Natural History Museum, is believed to be an immature animal. It stands 5 feet at the withers, and an adult okapi would, therefore, be probably nearer 6 feet in height. This extraordinary animal, discovered in the recesses of the Semliki, a part of the great Congo forest, is of a most ancient and primitive type. By the shape of the skull and the teeth it is manifestly a near ally to the giraffes, but the shape and configuration remind one much more of the hartebeest and the bastard hartebeest families than of the giraffes. The general body-colouring, a rich, glossy, purplish brown, at once reminded the writer of the tsesseby or bastard hartebeest, while the high withers and sloping quarters bear striking resemblance to those of a hartebeest or tsesseby. The clean, slender legs and the neat hoofs are again distinctly antelope-like; but against this must be set the fact that, like the giraffe, the okapi has no false hoofs. From its make and shape I should judge this animal to be a first-rate galloper, possessed, like the tsesseby, of great speed and stoutness. On the other hand, the head, in shape, but not in colouring (which is fawn upon the sides, reddish upon the ears and forehead), is manifestly more like that of the giraffe than any other animal. The eyes, however, instead of being large and melting like the giraffe's, are small and expressionless. The beast is rendered yet more bewilderingly curious by the bizarre, transverse



striping upon the rump and thighs and the upper parts of the fore legs. The remainder of the legs are mostly white, with black bands round the fetlocks, partial bands round the knees, and a black line down the front of each fore leg. Altogether a most strange and puzzling creature, forming, as it seems to me, a clear link between the giraffes and the antelopes. Nothing is at present known as to the sporting possibilities of the okapi. Natives report that it goes in pairs, and frequents the densest and most unfrequented part of the Semliki forest, between the eastern borders of the Congo Free State and the Uganda Protectorate, somewhere about the region of Lakes Albert and Albert Edward. It will probably be no great while before some enterprising Briton has penetrated these remote haunts and shot specimens of this animal.





## CHAPTER VI

### THE HARTEBEESTS AND GNUS

By H. A. BRYDEN

#### THE CAPE HARTEBEEST

WE now come to that magnificent series of antelopes, in which Africa, far beyond any other region of the world, so greatly abounds. The hartebeests alone number no less than nine species, or subspecies, and are found from the north to the south of the continent ; the Bubal hartebeest representing the most northerly habitat, the Cape hartebeest the extreme south of Africa. The nine hartebeests are, then : the Bubal, the West African, the Tora or

Tétel, Neumann's, Swayne's, Coke's, and Jackson's hartebeests, the Cape hartebeest, and Lichtenstein's hartebeest. All these are large antelopes, ranging in stature from 3 feet 7 inches in the Bubal, to 4 feet or thereabouts in the Cape, Tora, Swayne's, and Neumann's species. All are distinguished by their high withers, drooping quarters, long narrow faces, and nearly uniform body colouring, ranging from the greyish-brown of the Bubal, to the bright, reddish-brown of the Cape Hartebeest. In all both sexes carry horns, those of the female being somewhat slighter than are the horns of the males. All are possessed of marvellous speed and staying powers.

The *Cape Hartebeest* (*Bubalis caama*), being undoubtedly the best known and the most typical of all the group, may be first touched upon. This fine sporting beast, which once ranged freely all over Cape Colony and from thence to the Mababi river in the region of Lake Ngami, is now somewhat restricted in its habitat. Except in the Bushmanland country, towards the Orange river, to the north-west of the Colony, these antelopes have disappeared from the Cape territory south of that river; however, they are still fairly plentiful in many places, especially in the western parts of Bechuanaland, the Kalahari Desert, Khama's country, and the Botletli river veldt. At the Mababi river, just north of the Botletli, their northern range suddenly ceases. They are not found in Matabeleland, their easterly range ending at about the Serule river in Khama's country. In parts of Great Namaqualand and Damaraland they are still

occasionally to be met with, usually in the eastern portion, towards the Kalahari Desert. In Griqualand West, now, although north of the Orange, an integral part of Cape Colony, some fair troops are to be found. These are protected and are only shot at now and again. These hartebeests are perhaps most abundant, at the present day, in the desert country, partly grass, partly park-like forest, of the Northern Kalahari, in the westerly portion of Khama's territory of Bamangwato. Here I have found them in considerable numbers. I remember on a single small flat seeing a troop of nearly fifty of these fine antelopes, quietly feeding or lying down. As a rule they run in herds varying from seven or eight to fifteen or eighteen in number. The Cape, or red, hartebeest stands usually about 4 feet at the withers, though fine bulls will occasionally reach nearly 5 feet. The general colour is a bright brown-bay, darkening upon the back and bearing there a curious purplish tinge. On either rump a patch of yellowish white is noticeable. The front of the long, narrow face is black, and dark marks are found on the outer parts of the fore and hind legs. The eyes are reddish in hue, the tail black, with a reddish tint. The horns of all hartebeests are set very high upon the frontal bone, which is extremely prolonged. They are stout, corrugated for three-fourths of their length, and, first rising erect and outward, bend forward and then suddenly curve backwards and upwards at a blunt angle. A good pair of horns will measure from 21 to 24 inches over the frontal curve—the record is 25 inches.

## THE HARTEBEESTS AND GNUS 111

When first seen moving, in its slow paces, this antelope gives the impression of being a mule-like, cumbrous sort of beast. Nothing is more erroneous. When really alarmed and in earnest, the hartebeest stretches itself out marvellously, and with free, sweeping, machine-like action reels off mile after mile at a tremendous pace and with untiring energy. Except, perhaps, for its near cousin, the tsesseby—the bastard hartebeest of the Boers—there is no animal in Africa that for combined speed and staying power can compare with this fleet and enduring antelope. I have, with other hunters, attempted to run these beasts down. On one occasion we were well mounted on fresh horses, but we stood no sort of chance with the troop, and after a hot chase of seven miles, retired absolutely discomfited. Still hartebeest, although in my opinion among the most difficult of all game animals to bring to bag, are to be circumvented. They can be approached at times fairly easily in the pleasant forest glades of Bechuanaland and the Kalahari, if the wind is right and the hunter understands his business. They are very persistent in holding their course up-wind, and occasionally the mounted man is enabled to nick in upon the line of retreat and secure an easy shot. I once fairly cut a troop in half, and the animals were so bewildered that I was enabled to obtain a couple of decent shots at less than a hundred and fifty paces. Again, even when flying from the hunter, if the pursuit is not pushed too hard, these hartebeests, which are, like all the antelopes, extremely curious, will

now and again wheel round suddenly with the precision of a troop of horse—a most beautiful sight—and take stock of their pursuers. A fair shot may then be obtained at 200 or 250 yards. At night these animals are extremely fond of resorting to the salt-pans of Bechuanaland and the Ngamiland country. Here, as they lick the white brack, they are occasionally secured by hunters on moonlight nights. This hartebeest, like all its congeners, is, however, desperately tenacious of life, and, unless very well hit, will, more often than not, make its escape. With a broken leg or a bullet through the barrel, or even through one lung, it will, in eight cases out of ten, simply wear down the mounted man following it, and effectually secure its retreat. The flesh of this antelope is moderately good eating, and makes fair *būltong*, i.e. salted and sun-dried flesh. An expanding bullet of moderate calibre, .303 to .450, if well placed, is sufficient to secure the downfall of this animal. These hartebeests can, and do, exist for long periods without drinking, and, thanks to the dry and desert nature of their habitat, are likely to remain to South Africa for a good many years yet to come. Native names for the hartebeest are *Khama* of the Bechuanas and Masarwa bushmen; *Kama* of the Hottentots; *Ingama* of the Makalakas; and *Inhluzele* of the Zulus. The Boers usually designate this animal the *Rooi* (red) hartebeest, to distinguish it from the “Moff hartebeest” (Lichtenstein’s) and the “Bastard hartebeest,” or Tsesseby.

## THE HARTEBEESTS AND GNUS 113

### THE BUBAL AND OTHER HARTEBEESTS

The hartebeests bear so strong a family resemblance and have so much the same characteristics that it would be superfluous to describe them at length. The *Bubal hartebeest* (*Bubalis voselaphus*) is found in the remoter parts of Tunis, Morocco, and Algeria. It is one of the very few African wild ruminants whose range extends into Asia. It may still be found in the deserts of Arabia, and, some thirty years ago, was described by Canon Tristram as existing "on the borders of Gilead and Moab." The *West-African hartebeest* (*B. major*) is an almost exactly similar antelope to the Bubal; its habitat lies chiefly in Senegal, Gambia, Lower Nigeria, and the Cameroons, in which countries it is one of the commonest game animals.

The *Tora* or *Tétel* (*B. tora*) is a typical hartebeest—in size, shape, and colouring much resembling its Cape congener. It is found in Upper Nubia, portions of Abyssinia, and Kordofan.

*Neumann's hartebeest* (*B. neumanni*) (*Nginya* of the Wandorobo) may be described as a Tora of very local distribution, found in East Africa in the vicinity of Lake Rudolf, near Lakes Nakuru and Elmeteita, just north of Lake Naivasha, on the Mau plateau, and probably in some few other districts.

*Swayne's hartebeest* (*B. swaynei*) (*Sig* of the Somalis, *Korkei* of the Gallas) is found in various parts of Somaliland, especially in the waterless *Haud*

country, and in the Shoa country, Abyssinia. A very handsome species, pale chocolate-brown in colour.

*Coke's hartebeest* (*B. cokei*) (*Kongoni* of the Swahilis) is the commonest and most widely distributed of this group in East Africa. Its range, as far as at present known, extends from near the boundary of British and German East Africa in the south to Kikuyu, Mount Kenia, and the Mackenzie branch of the Tana river, in the north. Westward, it is not found much beyond the longitude of Naivasha. The colour of this hartebeest is of a pale yellowish-red, somewhat darker in the bulls.

*Jackson's hartebeest* (*B. jacksoni*) is also known to the Swahilis as *Kongoni*. By the Masai it is called *Elgusoroi* and *Elgorigor*, and by the Wandorobo *Rogoivek*. This hartebeest is the nearest cousin of the Cape hartebeest, to which, save for the face lacking the black marking, it bears a strong resemblance. Its habitat is not yet clearly defined, but its headquarters are the Mau plateau and Turkwel, British East Africa, its range extending west to the Nile Valley.<sup>1</sup>

*Lichtenstein's hartebeest* (*B. lichtensteini*) is a more southern species, having a wide habitat, from the Sabi river, south-east Africa, through Nyasaland and Mozambique to the latitude of Zanzibar. It may be easily recognised by the shape of the horns, which differ from those of all other hartebeests, curving backwards and inwards very curiously.

<sup>1</sup> The so-called *Heuglin's hartebeest*, found in the Bahr-el-Ghazal, Upper Nubia, and Kordofan, seems to be an identical species with Jackson's.



## THE BASTARD HARTEBEESTS

Within the last few years, Mr. Lydekker, one of our best known naturalists, has, after due research, classified together under the genus *Damaliscus*, or Bastard Hartebeests, the group of antelopes most nearly allied to the true hartebeests. These are Hunter's antelope, the Korrigum, and its first cousins, the Topi and Tiang, the Tsesseby, and the well-known Bontebok and Blesbok of South Africa.

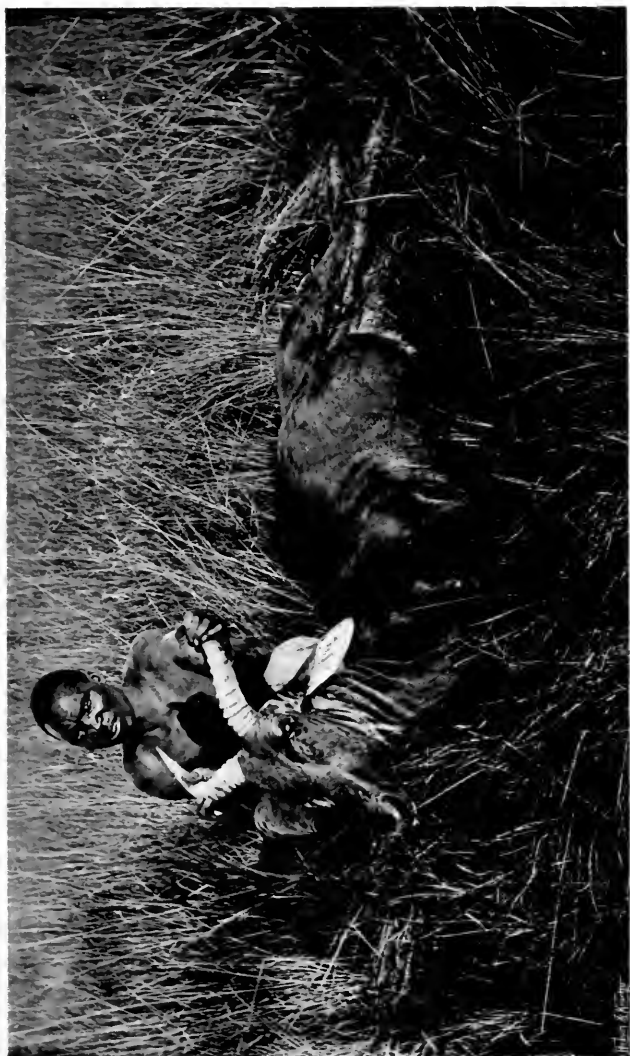
Of these *Hunter's hartebeest* (*Damaliscus hunteri*) is one of the least familiar. Found in the extreme south of Somaliland, on the north bank of the Tana river, this animal was first discovered by Mr. C. V. Hunter, in 1888. It is of the usual hartebeest size, standing about 4 feet at the withers, and is reddish-brown in colour, the upper part of the face, between the horns and the eyes, being decorated by a white chevron. The horns, which attain as much as  $26\frac{1}{4}$  inches in length, over the curve, are quite dissimilar to those of the rest of the hartebeests or bastard hartebeests, being lyrate in form, and, after an outward curve, run straight up to long and sharp points. Few Englishmen have as yet shot this rare and little-known antelope. In shape it resembles the hartebeests, frequents by preference open plains and thin bush, and runs in troops of from ten to twenty. At a distance, from the appearance of the horns, it might be mistaken for impala. It seems likely to prove a good sporting animal.

The *Korrigum*, or *Senegal hartebeest* (*D. corrigum*), is an antelope much more nearly resembling the true Bastard hartebeest, or Tsesseby, which I shall refer to at greater length. The body colouring is rufous. The corrugated horns are not so open as with the Tsesseby, and are only slightly lyrate in form. They measure as much as  $22\frac{1}{2}$  inches over the curve. The habitat of this animal lies in Senegambia and the interior of West Africa. Very little is known of it from the sportsman's point of view.

The *Tiang* (*D. corrigum tiang*) may be described as a local race of the Korrigum, found in Sennaar, Kordofan, and the Bahr-el-Ghazal province of the Soudan.

The *Topi* (*D. c. jimela*) is the East-African representative of the Korrigum of West Africa. It is manifestly not very distantly related to the Tsesseby of South Africa. It stands about 44 inches in height and has a brownish coat—having that rich, purplish sheen so characteristic of that antelope. It is found in British East Africa, is well known in Uganda, and is perhaps the commonest antelope in the maritime portion of the Galla country. It is not yet well known to Europeans as a beast of chase; Mr. Neumann found it not very difficult to approach, and appears to have been always able to shoot one or two, when meat or specimens were required. Near Reshiat, in the neighbourhood of Lake Rudolf, he found these animals grazing in thousands.

The *Tsesseby* (*Damaliscus lunatus*) is, as I have



NATIVE SHOWING TSESSEBY.



TSESSEBY ANTELOPE.

said, the true Bastard hartebeest of Africa, its name having been bestowed upon it by the Trek-Boers, when they first became acquainted with it in the Transvaal and Bechuanaland some sixty years since. It is sometimes also known by them as the Zulu hartebeest. *Tsesseby* is the Bechuana name for this antelope ; the Zulus and Swazis know it as *Mzansi* ; the Matabele as *Inkolomo* ; the Masarwa Bushmen as *Luchu* ; the Makalakas as *Inyundo* ; and the Barotse as *Kaboli*. In colour of a dark rufous, the Tsesseby's smooth, satin-like coat is distinguished by a wonderful, purplish, iridescent sheen, which in life is extraordinarily beautiful, but which fades a good deal after death. Portions of the body, the face, shoulders, hips, and the upper parts of the limbs are very dark, almost black in colour. The tail tuft is black. The horns, crescent-shaped and annulated nearly to the tips, are strong and robust. The face is not so long as in the true hartebeests. In stature the Tsesseby attains close upon 4 feet ; a good pair of horns measures from 14 to 15 inches over the curve.

In speed and in staying qualities this amazingly fleet antelope is not to be excelled by any animal in Africa. It is even more impossible to run down on horseback than the Cape hartebeest. It is, however, by no means difficult to stalk, and if approached by a mounted hunter, and not too hardly pushed, will, like its cousin the Hartebeest, occasionally wheel round to gaze at its pursuer. A bullet dropped in front of the troop will, as in the case of so many

antelopes, suffice to turn the troop, and if the leader be wounded and turned out, the rest of the troop often become confused, run hither and thither, and offer fair shots. It is to be remembered that the Tsesseby is astonishingly tenacious of life, and will carry away a vast amount of lead unless well hit. Any rifle of from .256 to .450 bore will suffice to account for this antelope. The Tsesseby's range may be described nowadays as South-East Africa, including Mashonaland, Gazaland, the Beira Country and Portuguese East Africa, parts of the Eastern Transvaal, Khama's country, and Ngamiland. The flesh of this antelope is fairly good eating.

The *Blesbok* (*Damaliscus albifrons*) was, not so many years ago, one of the most abundant antelopes in all South Africa. From the northern Karroos of Cape Colony to the high veldt of the Transvaal, it was to be found in scores and hundreds of thousands. Little more than a generation has sufficed for the skin-hunting Boers to effect the downfall of so prolific a species. At the present time the handsome Blesbok is only to be found in portions of the Western Transvaal and British Bechuanaland, and here and there in the Orange River Colony. Five years ago probably from 3000 to 5000 head still existed; since the war it is doubtful if anything like that quantity survive.

Standing about 3 feet 5 inches at the withers, the Blesbok is, for its size, an antelope of robust shape, having elevated, somewhat humpy withers and sloping quarters. The body-colouring is very beautiful, a



BLESBOK.



HERD OF PUKU.



warm brown, curiously glossed or glazed upon the upper parts with purplish and lilac tints. The sides of the head and neck are of a rich purplish brown; the chest and croup rufous. The legs, under parts, and a prominent blaze down the front of the long face are snow white. From this blaze (*bles* in Dutch) the antelope obtains its Boer name. The horns average about 15 inches, but a fine pair may measure as much as 17 or 18 inches.

This very beautiful and characteristic antelope has, like its ally the Tsesseby, extraordinary powers of running, and yields little, if at all, in fleetness and staying ability to that animal. The flesh is excellent eating. Blesbok can usually be stalked on certain Dutch farms in the Orange River Colony and Western Transvaal, by making a pecuniary arrangement with the owner; but since the war it is impossible yet to estimate the numbers of the herds, or remnants of herds, that remain.

The *Bontebok* (*Damaliscus pygargus*), a rare and local species, very nearly resembling the Blesbok, has in modern times always been confined to a small tract of country near Cape Agulhas, in Cape Colony. In shape, colour, and general appearance it is hardly to be distinguished by the casual observer from the Blesbok. The notable white rump-patches, however, a trifle less interruption of the white blaze on the upper part of the face, and a generally richer colouring, will suffice to identify the species. In stature the animals are almost identical. Ages ago the Bontebok and

Blesbok must have formed one species ; the stock somehow became separated, and the two races developed slightly varying characteristics. Bontebok are now strictly preserved, and may be only shot by permission of the owners of the two or three troops yet remaining. In all, they number, probably, not more than 300 head. The horns of the Bontebok are almost precisely similar to those of the Blesbok.

#### THE BRINDLED GNU

This large antelope, known universally in South Africa as the Blue Wildebeest (*Blaauw Wildebeest* of the Boers) (*Connochætes taurinus*), has an extremely wide range and is to be found, even at the present day, from British Bechuanaland and the adjacent Northern Kalahari right through British Central Africa to British East Africa. In Nyasaland a local race, known as Johnston's wildebeest, remarkable for a whitish bar across the middle of the face, is to be met with ; while in East Africa another closely allied sub-species, known as the White-bearded wildebeest, is to be found. The common Blue Wildebeest is extraordinarily abundant in Portuguese South-East Africa, especially between the Pungwe river and the Zambesi, and is found also in fair abundance in Rhodesia, North Bechuanaland, the Northern Kalahari, Ngamiland, Ovampoland, Damaraland, and Portuguese West Africa as far north as Benguela.

Both this and the White-tailed Gnu—referred to hereafter—may be described as among the oddest

and most bizarre of all beasts of chase to be found in Africa. To myself the Blue Wildebeest always seems clearly to represent the connecting link between the oxen and the antelopes. Classed by naturalists as a pure antelope, it has in the singularly bovine face and fore-quarters strong characteristics of our domestic cattle. Yet the legs—clean, slender, shapely and most wiry—are distinctly antelopean. The general colour is a slaty drab, brindled upon the neck, fore-quarters, and part of the barrel with dark vertical stripes. A thick, partly upstanding, partly flowing mane of shaggy black hair, and masses of hair about the face, dewlap, and chin, impart a wild and somewhat ferocious aspect to the heavy head. A pair of formidable, buffalo-like horns surmount the head, and the thick black switch tail almost touches the ground. The quarters are sloping and the form somewhat mule-like. The eyes are wild and yet very bovine in type. In height the Blue wildebeest reaches about 4 feet 3 inches at the withers.

So common is this gnu over many parts of Africa, that it must for many years remain one of the most familiar of animals to the hunter. Troops usually number from fifteen to fifty animals, but where these antelopes are abundant, they may be seen blackening the plains in scattered herds numbering two or three thousand head.

In South Africa, where I have hunted it on horseback, the Blue Wildebeest, being one of the fleetest and most enduring of all creatures, takes,

nowadays, a good deal of catching. As with the hartebeest, it is impossible to run it down in fair, tail-on-end chase. By getting between a troop grazing on the flat and the neighbouring bush to which it resorts, two mounted men can often, however, so flurry and puzzle a herd as to be able to obtain fairly easy shots, and by hard galloping and turning the herd to one another, secure what meat or trophies they may require. The shot is, of course, taken when dismounted. A bullet, striking up the dust in front of a galloping troop, will almost invariably turn the game in a completely different direction, even if they are nearing bush, and so enable the gunner to get in his shot; this manoeuvre can be repeated successfully two or three times. Where Blue Wildebeest are little molested, especially where occasional bush or tall ant-heaps offer convenient cover, the sportsman can usually obtain his shot within 200 or 250 yards. As a rule, however, these antelopes are sufficiently wary beasts, and, especially in East Africa, prove extremely difficult to stalk wherever the country is open. No beast in the world is more tenacious of life, and a badly wounded gnu is more likely than not to gallop clean away and make good its retreat, even although hit through the lungs, or with a broken leg. The flesh is poor eating—coarse, and only palatable to natives. The head—shaggy, massive, and Roman-nosed, and surmounted by horns measuring as much as from 23 to  $33\frac{1}{2}$  inches in width—forms a good trophy. Native names for this animal are *Kaop* of Hotten-



THE WHITE-TAILED GNU, OR BLACK WILDEBEEST.

John & Co.

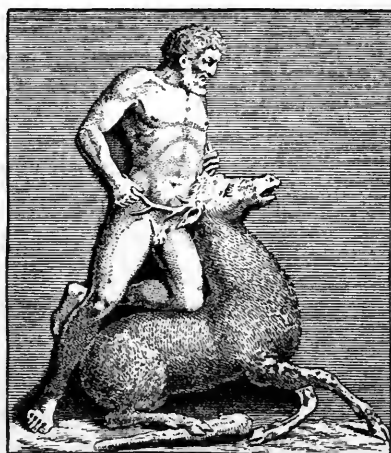


BLACK WILDEBEEST.

## THE HARTEBEEISTS AND GNUS 123

tots; *Kokoon* of Bechuanas; *Inkongone* of Zulus and Swazis; *Inkonekone* of Matabele; *Eevumba* of Makalakas; *Nyumbo* of Swahilis.

The *White-tailed Gnu*, or *Black Wildebeest* (*Zwart Wildebeest* of the Boers) (*Connochætes gnu*), was formerly enormously plentiful in Cape Colony and the Orange Free State. It has now been nearly exterminated, and only a few troops are found here and there on Dutch farms, where they are strictly preserved. Specimens, before the war, could be obtained at a cost of about £10 per head, and even at this price plenty of rich gunners from Johannesburg and elsewhere were found ready for the stalk. Before the war about 2000 head of these wild, grotesque-looking antelopes were remaining. It is probable that by this time the remnant totals less than half that number.





## CHAPTER VII

### THE ANTELOPES AND GAZELLES

By H. A. BRYDEN

#### THE WATERBUCKS

WATERBUCKS are now usually placed in two divisions: the waterbucks proper, and the kobs, or lesser waterbucks. Of these the common waterbuck and the sing-sings form the first division. These antelopes have the coat grizzled and the neck maned. The kobs are of smaller size, having rufous, or yellowish rufous, coats and no manes. Among these latter are ranked Mrs. Gray's waterbuck, the lechwe, the pookoo, the white-eared kob, and the Uganda and Buffon's kobs.

The *Waterbuck* (*Cobus ellipsiprymnus*) is, to my mind, one of the finest-looking antelopes to be found in all Africa. Standing about 4 feet 4 inches at the



shoulder, he carries a thick, rough coat, varying from a greyish to a reddish brown. The neck-ruff or mane is long, full, and reversed. Round the muzzle and lower lip, about the throat, and in front of the eyes, are white markings; and a curious white, elliptical band, from which the beast takes its name, crosses the rump and, as it were, encircles the tail. The face is brown, the legs are a darker brown, the forehead rufous. The brown tail reaches barely to the hocks. The horns are magnificent, thick, robust, strongly annulated, and having a fine curving sweep to the points. The waterbuck has a most noble carriage, as if thoroughly conscious of his own importance, and, standing by some quiet river pool or in front of a pale-yellow reed bed, he looks what he is—one of the true aristocrats among the fauna of the African wilderness. The female, being hornless, is a much humbler-looking animal than her handsome lord and master. Waterbucks are more or less gregarious, ranging the veldt—preferably stretches of grass and reedy flats—in the vicinity of African streams, in parties of from five or six to as many as twenty or thirty. Although a short-legged, heavily-built animal, this antelope is wonderfully active, and takes to rough and stony hillsides, or dense bush, where plenty of leaping is required, with equal facility. Even upon an open flat it can run at a more than respectable pace, and for a mile or so will give a well-mounted hunter plenty of employment. As a rule this fine antelope is to be sought among the bush, reeds, and scattered thorn-timber characteristic of the

African river-side. It is a wary beast, and the stalker requires to put forth all his skill to circumvent it. In countries where it has not been much shot at, however, it can be approached without great difficulty. When wounded or hard put to it—especially if, as sometimes happens, it has been hunted with dogs—the gallant beast will take to water and stand at bay, reminding one very much of the red deer of Europe. On such an occasion it ought to be approached with some care; it will charge desperately at times, and with its powerful horns is quite capable of inflicting dangerous and even fatal wounds. Many a good dog has been slain in these encounters.

Waterbucks are chiefly grass-feeders, and the most likely places to find them at early dawn are in open glades or clearings not far from bush and water. As a rule the ewes do most of the watching, and the waterbuck ram, with his harem of four or five ewes, is well looked after. These animals are magnificent swimmers, but seldom, unless very hard pressed indeed, take to the deep rivers where crocodiles abound. I have noticed exactly the same trait in the lechwe, one of the kobs or lesser waterbucks, and it may be taken as a general rule that all these water-loving antelopes, fond though they are of stream and water-side, are perfectly well aware of their deadly enemy the crocodile, and will never, if they can avoid it, take to the deep water.

I believe the finest waterbuck horns in Africa came, years ago, from the upper and middle reaches of the Limpopo river, where these buck were for-



A WATERBUCK.



TROOP OF WATERBUCK.

merly very abundant. Some excellent specimens have been obtained also at different times from various rivers of South-East Africa—the Sabi, Nuanetsi, Pungwe, and others—and from Mashonaland, Zululand, and the Lake Ngami country. A good average pair of horns will measure from 28 to 33 inches over the curve; the finest yet recorded<sup>1</sup> measure respectively  $36\frac{1}{2}$  and  $36\frac{1}{4}$  inches. These came from Delagoa Bay and “South Africa.” At the present time the waterbuck is first met with in South Africa on the lower reaches of the Limpopo river, where, however, it is becoming scarce. Thence, northward, it has a very extensive range through Nyasaland and East Africa as far as the Webbe (river) Shebeyli in Somaliland. It is found also on the Botletli, Chobi, Okavango, and other systems connected with Lake Ngami. The flesh is excessively coarse and unpalatable, and is seldom touched by Europeans. Waterbuck have a strong and characteristic odour, and the hunter may often wind them, or tell from their scent that they have only lately quitted the spot he stands in. The hide of this antelope is in much request among the Boers for making *velschoens*, the high-low shoes of home-tanned leather which most back-country Afrikaner Dutch still affect. The Boers, by the way, call this buck *Kring-gaat*. Native names are—in Bechuana, *Tumogha*; Matabele, *Sidumuga*; Makalaka, *Ee-tumuha*; Masarwa, *Gwelung-gwelee*; Barotse, *M'dongoma* or *Matutwi*; Swahili, *Koru*; Adone (Webbe Shebeyli

<sup>1</sup> *Records of Big Game.* Rowland Ward and Co.

natives, Somaliland), *Balanka*; Somali, *Balango*. A suitable weapon for waterbuck, as for all large antelopes, would be a .400, .450, or even a .303 rifle or Mannlicher, using modern charges, cordite powder, and expanding bullets. It is to be remembered that this antelope has great vitality, and requires hard and accurate hitting to bring to bag.

The sing-sings are true waterbucks, and differ little from the animal just described.

The *West African Sing-Sing* (*Cobus defassa unctuosus*), found in Senegal, Gambia, and Nigeria, is of dark-grey colouring, and, in place of the white rump ring, has a large white patch on either side of the stern.

*Crawshay's Sing-Sing* (*Cobus defassa crawshayi*) is slightly less in size than the foregoing species, and is of bluish-grey colouring, having the usual white-rump patches of these waterbucks. It was discovered in 1892 by Captain R. Crawshay in British Central Africa.

*Penrice's Sing-Sing* (*Cobus defassa penricei*), a very handsome species, discovered within the last ten years by Mr. G. W. Penrice in the Portuguese province of Benguela, and found ranging as far south as the Cunene river, is a very dark-coloured waterbuck, differing little from the others of this race. The horns attain as much as 29 inches over the curve; those of the West African Sing-Sing reaching  $29\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and Crawshay's  $24\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

The *typical Sing-Sing* (*Cobus defassa typicus*) has its home in East Africa, and is found in Abyssinia,



BULL WATERBUCK—N.W. RHODESIA.



A WOUNDED LECHWE.



the Soudan, the White Nile valley, Uganda, and British and German East Africa. The colour is somewhat more rufous than in the other waterbucks, and the horns measure as much as  $35\frac{1}{2}$  inches in a record specimen, obtained by Major Sitwell, near Toru.

The *Kobs* or *lesser Waterbucks* are a very interesting group, of which *Mrs. Gray's Waterbuck* (*Cobus maria*) differs materially from all the rest. The body-colouring is very remarkable—a rich, dark, reddish brown, with notable white markings on the head, the back of the neck, shoulders, sides, hips, and tail. The underparts are also pure white. The horns differ considerably from those of the larger waterbucks, and have a unique, sinuous twist which can at once be recognised. They measure as much as 32 inches in a good pair. This rare and curiously pied waterbuck is found in the swamps of the White Nile and its tributaries, where it is found ranging in large herds. Only recently—since the conquest of the Soudan—have specimens been obtained, after the lapse of many years, by British officers and travellers.

The *Lechwe* (*Cobus leche*) is one of the best known of this handsome group. This beautiful antelope stands 3 feet 4 inches at the shoulder, and carries (in the male) horns averaging, in good specimens, from 25 to 26 inches.<sup>1</sup> The record pair attain  $34\frac{1}{2}$  inches, another pair, obtained at Lake Bangweolo, reach  $33\frac{1}{2}$  inches, but these are abnormally fine.

<sup>1</sup> It is to be remembered that the females of all the waterbucks—lesser and greater—are hornless.

The thick coat is rufous-yellow in hue, with white underparts. The skin of this buck is much sought by natives, who use it—I suppose from its damp-resisting properties—as a sleeping-mat. Never found very far from water, the lechwe, with its handsome form, gallant carriage, and fine horns, is one of the greatest ornaments of the rivers and lagoons of Central and South-Central Africa. I found this antelope in fair abundance about the lagoons and spreading alluvial flats of the Botletli river, where we had first-rate and most interesting sport with it. It has plenty of speed, and upon the dry, sun-baked flats, where one sometimes found it before the inundation had reached this locality, it was fleet enough to outrun for a mile or two our hunting ponies. It makes always for shallow lagoons, dense reed beds, and flooded flats, and a small troop of these antelopes, bounding through the water with huge leaps, driving showers of spray on all sides of them, forms a most beautiful spectacle.

The lechwe is a first-rate swimmer, but shuns, as far as possible, the deeper, crocodile-haunted rivers. Lechwe stalking is one of the most varied and interesting forms of sport. These animals are extremely wary, and great care, patience, and fair shooting are required in dealing with them. They have immense vitality, and more than once I have lost lechwe that seemed absolutely certain of coming to bag. The feet of these antelopes, as of the situtunga, are completely devoid of hair from the false hoofs downwards, smooth black skin showing



*BLACK LECHWE.*



A GOOD LECHWE RAM.

only where hair is usually found. The hoofs are very elongated. This is, of course, a development attributable to their marsh and water-loving habits. Lechwe are found, in addition to the river systems of Ngamiland and Angola, on the Chobi, Upper Zambesi, and other rivers, as far north as Lake Bangweolo and Lake Mweru, Central Africa. Where they have not been much hunted, they are to be found about the flooded plains and lagoons in very large numbers, and hundreds are speared by natives, who, paddling about in boats, drive them into deep water. The flesh is fairly good eating—certainly much better than that of the larger waterbucks.<sup>1</sup>

The *Pookoo* or *Puku* (*Cobus vardoni*) is another handsome kob, found in Barotseland (Lewanika's kingdom), British Central Africa, about Lake Bangweolo, and as far north even as the Congo Free State, where it has been met with in the Luwulē valley. Reddish yellow in colour, with very rufous fore-legs, the pookoo is distinguishable from the lechwe by its longer and somewhat curling coat, its lighter form, and its smaller horns, which measure, in picked specimens, not more than  $20\frac{1}{4}$  inches. Enormous herds are to be found in the Lake Mweru and Luapula river countries. The flesh is very unpalatable.

Others of the lesser waterbucks, or kobs, are the

<sup>1</sup> Within the last year or two a dark-coated form of Lechwe (*Cobus smithemani*) has been discovered by Mr. Frank Smitheman near Lake Mweru. Instead of the usual reddish-yellow colouring, this species carries a rich, dark-brown coat, with nearly black markings, contrasting very notably with the spotless white underparts.

Uganda kob, found in East Africa ; Buffon's kob, whose habitat ranges from the Gambia to Nigeria, and the white-eared kob, found about the White Nile and its tributaries. The white-eared kob is met with in the same country as Mrs. Gray's waterbuck, and has occasionally been confused with that antelope. It ranges in large herds, has much the same pied appearance, but is smaller, lighter, and carries considerably smaller horns. All these water-loving antelopes, it should be remembered, frequent very fever-haunted country, and should be pursued, as far as possible, only in the driest and healthiest season of African winter.

#### THE REEDBUCKS

The *Common Reedbuck* (*Cervicapra arundinum*) is a capital sporting beast, affording excellent shooting, and is found in many parts of Southern Africa, as far as Angola in the western and the Mozambique provinces in the eastern part of the continent. Rare nowadays in the eastern part of Cape Colony, it is found in fair plenty in Zululand, Amatongaland, the Transvaal low country, Rhodesia, Khama's country, Ngamiland, Ovampoland, and Nyasaland. My friend Mr. Penrice tells me it is quite plentiful in Portuguese West Africa, while in Mozambique there is no scarcity of this handsome antelope. As a rule, frequenting grassy valleys, near rivers and streams and the vicinity of reed beds, the reedbuck is not so completely water-loving a species as its bigger



*PUKU ON THE LOOK-OUT.*



*PUKU RAM.*



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cousins, the kobs. Three or four of these animals are usually found in a party—the ram, ewe, and one or two young. The reedbuck ram stands about 3 feet at the shoulder, and carries well-annulated horns, which bend outward, backward, and upward, and measure in fine specimens as much as 16 or 18 inches. From 13 to 14 inches are good measurements for average horns. The females are hornless.

The coat is yellowish brown in colour, the hair of the neck being thick and lengthy. The tail—short, broad, and bushy, and white underneath—is much employed, and when the buck is alarmed and darts off, it is elevated and depressed in a curiously restless manner. When alarmed or disturbed the reedbuck usually gives vent to a shrill whistle, and at night the same sound may be frequently heard as the animals are on the move or at play. A reedbuck will often lie extremely close, and starting out suddenly from its form, dashes off at great speed, so that the hunter requires to be a quick and alert shot with the rifle to bring it down. These animals, however, often stand again in a hundred yards or so, so that a fair, if somewhat rapid, shot can be obtained. Occasionally they may be stalked with some success, but they are very restless beasts, and the approach must be made with great caution. The .303, or Mannlicher, is an excellent rifle for this buck; but they are wiry animals, very tenacious of life, and expanding bullets should be employed with them. The flesh is not very good eating. It is curious, indeed, how few of the water-frequenting

antelopes furnish decent venison. The Boers call this antelope *Rietbok* ; the Bechuanas, *Cipohata* ; with Kaffirs and Swazis it is *Inthlangu* ; *Mziki* of Zulus and Matabele, *Iklabu* of Transvaal Basutos, and *Eebeepa* of Makalakas.

The *Bohor Reedbuck*, an antelope of somewhat smaller size than the foregoing, is found over part of East Africa, chiefly in Abyssinia and Gallaland. The horns measure in the best examples no more than from 12 to 13 inches, ordinarily some 3 inches less.

A new reedbuck, known as *Ward's Reedbuck*, has quite recently been identified in British East Africa. This was long confused with the more northern form of Bohor, but appears to be a not distantly allied sub-species.

The *Nagor* of West Africa (*Cervicapra redunca typica*) is yet another reedbuck, more closely related to Ward's reedbuck than any other of the group. This is the smallest of the family, measuring no more than 28 inches at the withers.<sup>1</sup>

The *Mountain Reedbuck* (*Cervicapra fulvorufula*) was long known as the *Rooi Rhebok* (red roebuck) of the Boers, and will, without doubt, be still called by that familiar name by all South African sportsmen. This animal has long been a puzzle to hunters and naturalists. Although possessing the form and characteristics of the true reedbucks, especially in the shape of the horns, it is almost purely a mountain dweller. I have usually found it frequenting the

<sup>1</sup> Five forms of Bohor reedbuck are now recognised, viz. *Cervicapra redunca typica* ; *C. R. cottoni* ; *C. R. bohor* ; *C. R. donaldsoni* ; and *C. R. wardi*.

lower slopes of rugged mountains, whereon, upon the higher portions, ranged the well-known Vaal rhebok. The Boers, finding these two antelopes on the same hills, sometimes, when disturbed by shooting, even running together, at once named the lighter one, the Vaal (grey), rhebok, the darker one the rooi rhebok. And to Boers and colonists, no doubt, both will remain rhebok to the end of the chapter. It is a curious circumstance, noted by Mr. F. V. Kirby, that this animal is known to the Zulus and Swazis as *Inhlango'matshe*, or "Reedbuck of the Stones"—a very telling description.

The mountain reedbuck, as I must call it here, though from old association I much prefer the title rooi rhebok, affords excellent stalking, and is to be found in many parts of Central and Eastern Cape Colony, and thence northward through the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, as far as Bechuanaland where I have found it among the hills of the Protectorate. It is to be met with in Natal, Zululand, and Swaziland, and other parts of South-East Africa. It has been found sparingly in British East Africa. The colour is reddish brown, sometimes grey-brown, the height about 30 inches, and the horns measure from 5 to 8 inches. Although thorough hill-lovers, these antelopes are certainly very closely allied to the other reedbucks, and the shrill whistle and restless tail action remind one strongly of the common reedbuck. Two slightly varying forms, the Lydenburg and Chanler's mountain reedbucks, have been found in Africa, the first in the Eastern Transvaal,

the second in some mountains of British East Africa. The one shows a tendency to albinism, the other exhibits a dark nose-streak. The venison of the rooi rhebok is very fair eating. The Cape Kaffir name for this antelope is *Inxala*.

#### THE VAAL RHEBOK

This is another of the mountain-dwelling antelopes, found, as I have said, often upon the same hills as the rooi rhebok. It affords most excellent sport, and I have enjoyed some of the finest of hill stalking in the wilder mountains of Cape Colony with this buck. The Vaal or grey rhebok differs from every other antelope in Africa, and has for that reason been placed in a genus of its own, *Pelea*. Its scientific name is *Pelea capreolus*. The Bechuanas call it *Peeli*; the Zulus and Swazis, *Iliza*; and the Transvaal Basutos, *Pshiatla*. This antelope stands not more than 30 inches at the shoulder, and carries straight, slender, sharp horns, annulated over half their length, and measuring from 7 to 11 inches. The record pair, from Spitzkop, in the Eastern Transvaal, reach 11½ inches. The colour is pale grey, and the coat is unique among African antelopes, being of a thick, woolly texture, not unlike the fur of a rabbit. The form is slight and graceful, but the long slender legs impart a somewhat stilty appearance to this buck. When fully extended this stiff, stilty action is more apparent than real, and no beast that I am aware of can climb hills at the pace



A REED-BUCK.



WATERBUCK HEADS.

and with the wonderful lightness and agility of these animals. The klipspringer has greater jumping powers, displayed in leaping from rock to rock and coign to coign ; but a troop of Vaal rhebok, usually six or eight, sometimes as many as twelve, in number, always seem to me to glide over the steepest and stoniest hill slopes in a manner little short of marvellous. The white underpart of the short tail is usually displayed in flight, reminding one of the reedbucks and the rabbit. Vaal rhebok are common all over South Africa from Cape Colony to the Zambesi, wherever hills are found. They choose by preference, especially in a country where they are much hunted, the higher parts of the mountains, but at early morning may sometimes be met with on the lower slopes. They may be shot at dawn, as they return from drinking, by some path known to a native hunter. They are shy, timid beasts, and a sharp, suspicious old ram is usually to be found standing sentinel to the herd. Stalking the Vaal rhebok calls up all the best qualities of the foot-hunter ; endurance, perseverance, and accurate shooting are essentials, and the aid of a Kaffir, who thoroughly understands the habits and peculiarities of these antelopes, is generally advisable. It is preferable to approach the Vaal rhebok from above, and the wind and the ground must be studied with at least as much care as is shown in red deer stalking. The flesh of this antelope is but poor eating.

## THE PALLAH

The *Pallah* or *Impala* (*Æpyceros melampus*) is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful and characteristic of all African antelopes. With its rich, reddish-chestnut colouring (toning off to a paler rufous-fawn towards the underparts, thence changing to spotless white on the belly and inner parts of the limbs), its graceful form, slender legs, and elegant horns, this most lovely of the bush-loving antelopes, wandering as it does in large troops, forms one of the greatest adornments of the river-side, and of the open jungles and low forests in the vicinity. A full-grown pallah stands about 33 inches at the shoulder, and although not reckoned among the larger antelopes, its singular beauty and fine horns render the downfall of a good ram of this species well worthy of the hunter's skill. The horns are unlike those of any other antelope, and in comparison with the size of the animal are of excellent length and proportions. Fair average horns measure 24 or 25 inches over the curve, while record specimens reach as much as 29 or 30 inches. Tending upward and outward, and then, rather past the middle, taking a curve back, they rise thence upwards to the sharp points. They are strongly corrugated for two-thirds of their length. The sweep of a pallah's horns is bold and wide, and from tip to tip a good pair will measure as much as from 15 to 24 inches. The female is hornless.

At the present time pallah are still to be found in



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fair abundance in the Eastern and Northern part of the Transvaal; thence their range is a wide one throughout East and parts of Central Africa, reaching as far north as the Tana river, British East Africa. Westward, they are to be found in Khama's country (Bamangwato), on the Chobi river and the Okavango. In the Kaoko veldt, Damaraland, and the Portuguese province of Mossamedes, just north of German territory, a slightly varying form has been brought to light, and named (as a sub-species) the Angolan impala. Excepting for the dark streaks which extend over the eyes and down either side of the face, however, it can scarcely be said that this pallah presents any characteristics separating it from the ordinary species.

These antelopes drink frequently, often two or three times a day, and are seldom to be found far from water. Yet they are not invariably found in what may be called a well-watered veldt. I have met with them in the dry forests of Khama's country, where water was distinctly scarce and the river-courses were mostly void of that element. Pallah, as they are the most graceful, are also among the most fleet and active of all African antelopes. Their leaping powers are extraordinary, and their bounds, when they are alarmed and fully extended, measure as much as from 28 to 35 feet. They will often leap in play, very much as do spring-buck, and when startled they bound high in air just as those antelopes are accustomed to do. Pallah run in troops varying in number from eight or ten to as

many as 200. They are not difficult beasts to stalk, sheltering as they do in park-like, open woodland and scattered bush, where the gunner, if the wind is right, can approach with no great trouble. When disturbed they dart off at speed, spreading out in a longish line. When approached in thick bush, they seem often unable to make out the whereabouts of the sportsman's shot, and a right and left, or even three buck, may be thus occasionally obtained. With smokeless powder this is even more feasible. Pallah take a good deal of killing, and unless mortally wounded the gunner may lose his buck in the dense bush to which the animals resort for sanctuary. The flesh, if the antelope is in good condition, is capital eating. The Boers always call these animals *Rooibok* (red buck). Native names are *Pallah* of the Bechuanas and Basutos; *Impala* of the Zulus, Matabele, Swazis, and Matonga; *Eepala* of Makalakas; *Kug'ar* of Masarwas; *Nswala* of Zambesi and Central African natives, and of the Swahilis.

#### THE GEMSBOK

The noble gemsbok (*Oryx gazella*), the oryx of South Africa, one of the finest and most notable of all the more important African antelopes, has been known to South African colonists for many generations. First discovered by the Boers in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, when the early colonists penetrated from the Cape settlements to the Great Karroo, it has, notwithstanding much persecution,



*IMPALA RAM.*



ORYX BEISA—SOMALILAND.

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managed to maintain its ground in South Africa ever since. Even at the present moment some fair troops of these antelopes still linger in the deserts of Great Bushmanland and Namaqualand, in the far north-west of Cape Colony. The gemsbok is one of the most familiar antelopes of the Kalahari, and in the remoter parts of that dry and desert region these animals will probably maintain themselves for many years yet to come. They are still plentiful also in Khama's and Sebeli's country, which includes a large portion of the Northern and Central Kalahari; while in Ngamiland, Damaraland, and the Portuguese territory behind Mossamedes and Port Alexander, they are met with in fair numbers. It is self-evident that the gemsbok owes much of its present immunity to its desert-loving habits. Almost absolutely independent of water, it exists for seven or eight months together without drinking. When the rains fall and the desert pans and pools fill up for a few brief weeks, the oryx resorts to water, but at other times it is content to exist without moisture. Like other desert-loving beasts it is a frequenter of the salt pans, and licks the hard white brack; and occasionally it may dig up with its sharp, neat hoofs those moist, turnip-like bulbs, known to the Bechuanas and Bakalahari as *sosuma*. It devours, too, the wild, bitter water-melons, which now and again cover the desert in vast quantities.

Although not so large an animal as the eland, koodoo, and sable and roan antelopes, the gemsbok has always seemed to me to be one of the most

magnificent of the antelopes of Africa. Its horns are among the finest and most coveted hunting trophies to be obtained in any part of the world. Long and straight, tapering to sharp, spear-like points, annulated for rather more than half their extent, they attain in good average specimens from 38 to 43 inches. The finest gemsbok horns yet recorded were in the possession of the late Mr. J. S. Jameson; they measured no less than 3 feet  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length. It is worthy of note that the horns of the females are in this species finer, longer, and sharper than those of the males. A bull's horns may be always picked out by their shorter and blunter appearance. The grand, spear-like sweep of these incomparable horns is unique, and the fact that the gemsbok of South Africa is always a difficult beast to find, and by no means an easy one to stalk or gallop down, will always render these trophies among the most highly valued of all the African fauna—prime rewards of the hunter's skill and staying power. The best gemsbok country in South Africa, the Northern Kalahari, is at the same time the most dangerous. Here, where troops of those fine antelope range in desert security, the scant pits of water may be sixty or eighty miles apart. If the hunter should miss his direction and lose himself—one of the simplest things in the world in the trackless Kalahari—he may die of thirst unless rescued within a few days. Horses cannot stand against thirst as can oxen, and after two days without water will probably succumb. Thenceforth the wanderer must trust to his own

strength and thirst-resisting powers. No man ought to hunt in the Kalahari without the aid of Masarwa bushmen, who are familiar with the desert and are incapable of losing themselves. And, in addition, the European sportsman penetrating that country ought to be accompanied always by a native after-rider who understands spooring, is used to the veldt, and knows the ways of the Masarwas. Water-carts (*i.e.* casks mounted on wheels) may be utilised for a few days while gemsbok or giraffe hunting; but horses are big drinkers, and the contents of a cask soon vanish.

The gemsbok stands from 3 feet 9 inches to 4 feet at the withers, and is a stoutly built antelope, warm grey in colour, having a white face most singularly painted with black-brown markings. These markings impart somewhat the semblance of a head-stall. Along the side and flanks, and on the upper parts of the legs are dark markings. The under parts are pure white. A dark, thick mane clothes the strong, full neck. The tail is long, black, and sweeping. Conscious, as it were, of its own dignity, and possessing a somewhat martial aspect, the gemsbok, in its native veldt, is beyond question one of the noblest ornaments of the desert.

These animals run in troops varying in number from seven or eight to as many as twenty or even more. The old bulls, when driven from the troop by younger rivals, roam the veldt alone; I have found at times that these individuals may be pretty closely approached. I once watched one, standing at 70 yards' distance, staring full at our party for

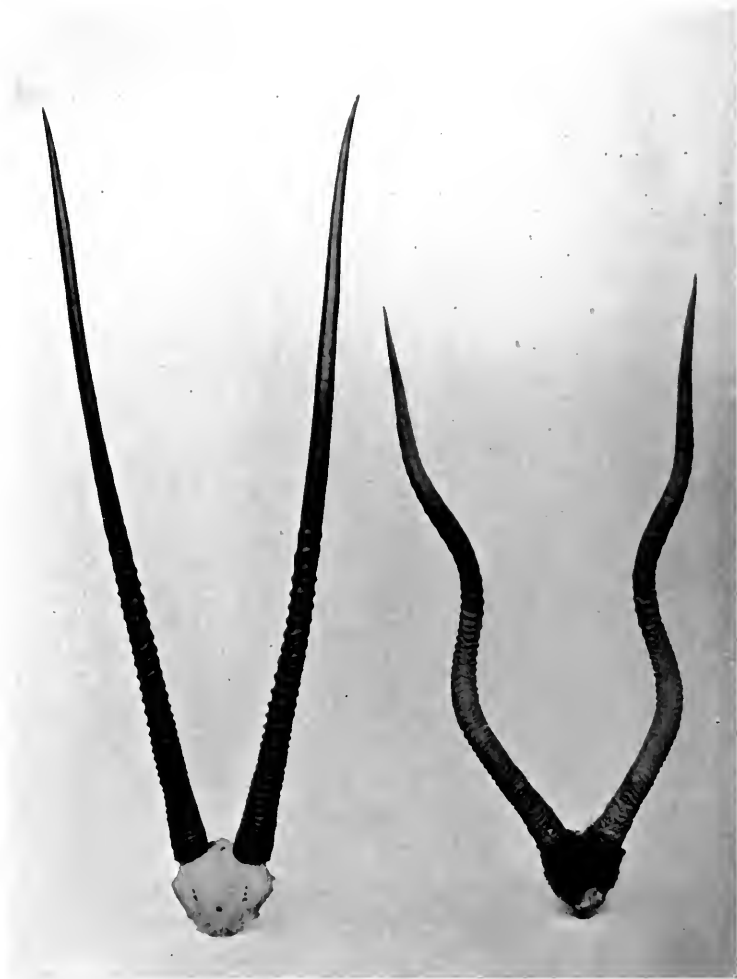
two or three minutes. As a rule they are found on open grass plains or in thinly bushed country, sometimes in open, park-like stretches of giraffe-acacia forest. They are occasionally stalked, but stalking in desert country is not a pastime that recommends itself to the white sportsman. It is a sport fit only for bushmen and Bakalahari. At night these antelopes can be shot occasionally at the bracks and salt-pans to which they are known to resort. The best and most usual way to hunt them is on horseback. If poor and in light condition, they take a great deal of running down, and will probably beat a good Cape hunting pony. If the antelope is in fair average condition, however, a well-mounted sportsman can, after a long gallop, usually wear a gemsbok down and obtain his shot. Great care should be taken in approaching one of these animals when wounded or at bay; the antelope may charge in desperation, and can inflict severe and even fatal wounds with its long horns. There is a persistent legend in South Africa that the gemsbok occasionally impales the lion in its spring, and natives say that only young and inexperienced lions will attack these animals. When thus assailed, the gemsbok throws itself to the ground and offers its spear-like horns to all points of attack. A wounded sable antelope will do the same thing. The flesh of the gemsbok is pretty good eating, and its tough hide in much request for *riems* or raw-hide halters.

The Bechuana name for this antelope is *Kukama*; the bushmen of the Kalahari know it as *Ko*.





CAMP ON THE UPPER KAFUE RIVER,



*HORNS OF GEMSBOK AND ADDAX.*  
*Owned by Sir Edmund Loder, Bart.*

## THE BEISAS, LEUCORYX, AND ADDAX

The *Beisa* (*Oryx beisa*) of North-East Africa is a near cousin of the gemsbok of the south. There is some slight difference in the face markings, and the tuft of hair found on the throat of the South African species is lacking in this animal. The flank stripe and leg markings are also absent. The horns are somewhat shorter, the finest recorded pair reaching 40 inches only. Beisa are found in East Africa from the equator to as far north as the neighbourhood of Suakim on the Red Sea. They are excellent sporting animals, very hard of approach on open plains, but are, with care, to be stalked successfully in thin bush.

The *Fringe-Eared Beisa* (*Oryx callotis*) is a subspecies, found in British East Africa and the Galla country. Its chief claim to a specific title of its own lies in the fact that the ears are decorated with long fringes or tassels of hair; the face marking also is slightly different. The Swahili name for both these animals is *Chiroa*; in Abyssinian the beisa is known as *Sala*; in Somali as *Beit*.

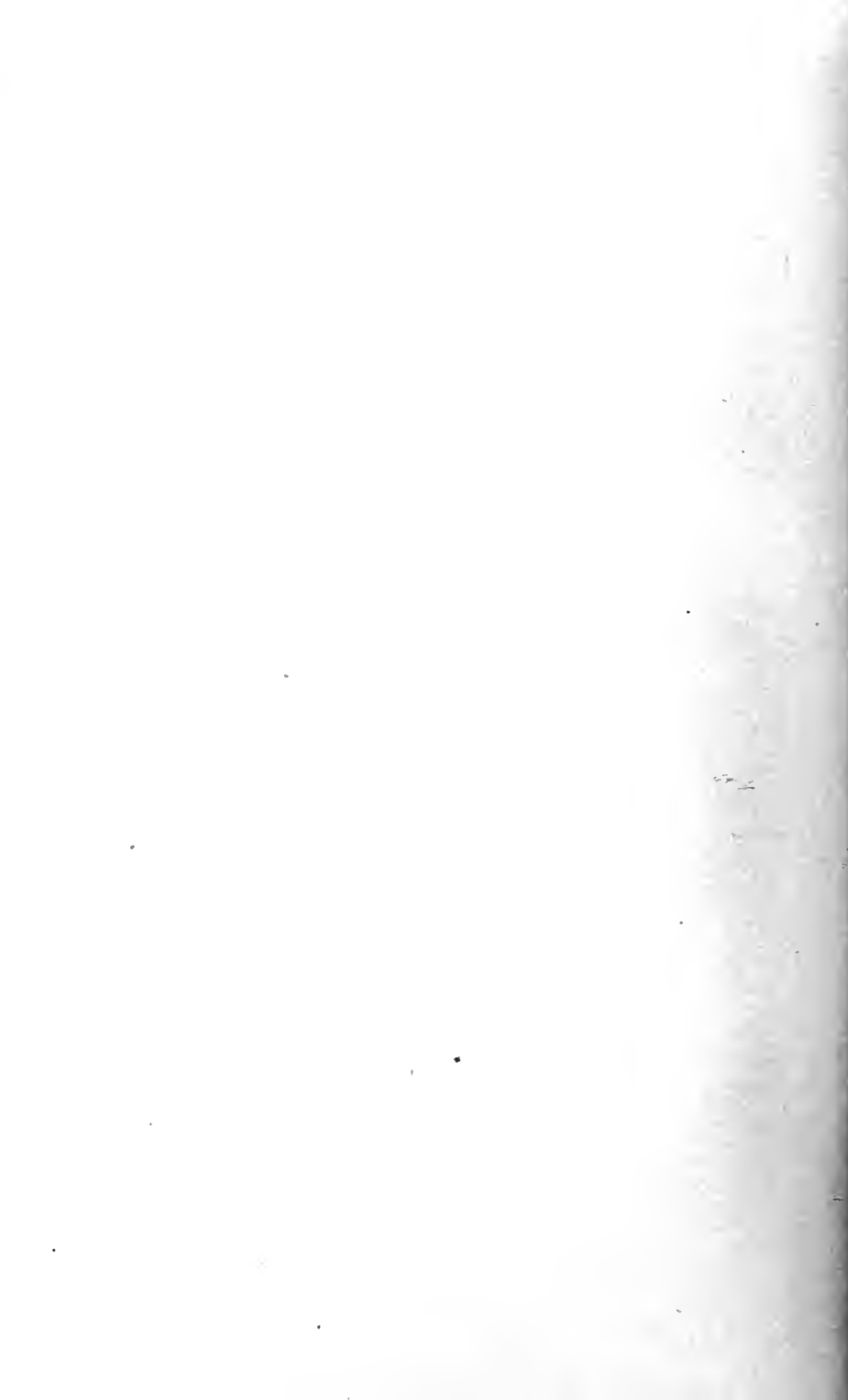
The *Leucoryx*, or white oryx (*Oryx leucoryx*), of Senaar, Kordofan, Nubia, and the Southern Sahara, is very little known to European hunters. It is purely a desert-loving beast, whitish in colour, with a strong tinge of chestnut, chiefly upon the neck and fore-quarters. The horns, more curving and scimitar-like in their sweep than are those of the

true oryxes, attain as much as  $39\frac{1}{2}$  inches over the curve.

The *Addax* (*Addax nasomaculatus*) is another very little known antelope, nearly allied to the oryx group, but distinguished by spiral horns, strongly ringed for two-thirds of their length. Good specimens of addax horns measure from 32 to  $39\frac{1}{2}$  inches over the curve. The addax stands about 3 feet 6 inches in height, varies from yellowish white in summer to a greyish white in winter, and is an ungainly, awkward-looking beast, clothed about the neck, shoulders, and forehead with a mane of longish dark-brown hair. Roaming the wastes of the Sahara, Southern Tunisia, and the Algerian hinterland, and found also amid the deserts of Arabia, the addax is known to the Arabs of North Africa as *Bakr-al-Wahsh*, or "ox of the desert." It is a pure antelope, albeit one of the clumsiest and least attractive-looking of its family. Mounted Arabs hunt this animal occasionally with swift hounds, but it seems rarely if ever to have fallen to the bullet of the Englishman. Its habitat is difficult of access, and it would be somewhat in the nature of a feat if some thirst and heat-resisting Briton penetrated the Sahara and shot and brought out specimens of this rare antelope. At the present day it is probably most accessible from Tunis or Algeria, but the sportsman would have to travel far south to come across it.



ABOUT TO FACE THE DESERT.



## THE SABLE AND ROAN ANTELOPES

We come now to two of the most magnificent of all the long array of African antelopes. First discovered by Cornwallis Harris in the year 1837, in the Magaliesberg Mountains of the country we now call Transvaal, the sable antelope (*Hippotragus niger*), by reason of its grand horns, great size, and fine shape and colouring, has ever since been one of the most prized of all African game. Standing as much as 4 feet 6 inches at the withers, the sable is one of the noblest and most aristocratic-looking, as it is one of the largest of all the antelopes. Only the eland, the koodoo, and roan antelope exceed it in stature. The horns are truly magnificent—sweeping, scimitar-like, in a fine backward curve over the withers, strongly annulated and very sharp at the points. No horned beast in Africa can defend itself more desperately with these weapons, or is more dangerous to approach ; and a bull sable-antelope will kill half a dozen dogs with a few lightning-like sweeps of its terrible horns. A good average pair of bull horns measure from 38 to 40 inches, but fine specimens attain as much as 48 and even 50 inches. A pair, recorded by Mr. Rowland Ward in the last edition of his *Records of Big Game*, measure no less than  $50\frac{7}{8}$  inches over the curve. These were obtained in Barotseland, and are in the collection of the Hon. Walter Rothschild. The coat of the full-grown male is wonderfully handsome, almost jet black upon the upper parts,

the sable tinged here and there with chestnut ; the under parts are snow white, the forehead and face dark brown, striped first with white, then with light brown ; the chin and jaws are white. The brownish-black mane, so notable in this species, is thick and upstanding. The tail is black. The females are much lighter and browner coated than the males, and carry horns considerably inferior in size. The Boers, in their rough and ready way, christened this antelope *Swart-wit-pens*—that is, “black with white belly.” Native names are, in Bechuana, *Potoquane* (south), *Qualata inchu* (north) ; Matabele, *Umtjiele* ; Makalaka, *Pala-Pala* ; Mashona, *Inquarati* and *Maraballa* ; Zulu and Swazi, *Impala impala* ; Masarwa bushmen, *Solupe*. It is very singular that the Swahilis of East Africa, who are far removed from Southern Africa and its native races, call this antelope *Pala-pala*, which is exactly the same designation as that of the Makalakas of Southern Rhodesia.

The present habitat of this species may be said to range from the Eastern Transvaal and Southern Rhodesia (Matabeleland and Mashonaland), through Central and East Africa, as far north as German East Africa. They have been seen and occasionally shot in British East Africa, where their range seems to be limited to a piece of coast country near the Anglo-German border. Westward their range extends through Khama's country, Ngamiland, and Barotse-land as far as Angola, Portuguese West Africa. Undoubtedly the country where these antelopes were



most plentiful was North Mashonaland, where, until a few years since, they were to be found in very large numbers. Since the settlement of Rhodesia their numbers here have been considerably reduced ; but in the remoter parts of Mashonaland good troops of these animals, numbering as many as thirty or forty, still exist. From ten to twenty is about the usual number of a troop ; but in the year 1895 Mr. Selous met with a herd of these antelopes in Mashonaland which numbered no less than eighty.

Sable antelope frequent by choice rolling, thinly-bushed veldt, or thinly-timbered country, in the vicinity of low hills and running streams. When not harassed by gunners they are often far less timid and suspicious than other antelopes. In 1890, when Mr. Rhodes's pioneers entered Mashonaland, a friend of the writer, stalking behind a screen of bush not far from camp, shot no less than three of these fine buck, one after another, before the troop became alarmed and moved off. These shots were all within less than 100 yards. On another occasion several of these antelopes, catching sight of a mounted hunter, cantered right up to him, evidently in the belief that man and horse were some wild and innocuous creature of the veldt like themselves.

In South Africa, as far north as Mashonaland, where horses can be used, sable antelope can very well be pursued on horseback, the hunter usually dismounting to take his shot, or leaving his nag, and stalking in upon the troop on whose spoor he has been riding. This is by far the easiest and pleasantest

way of shooting this buck. Sable can run at a great pace and are good stayers, and it takes a very good horse indeed to run them down; in fact, in seven cases out of ten, the antelope will probably get the better of the horse. If dogs are used, a single bull, or one out of two or three, can be pretty often brought to bay and shot; but when dogs pursue a biggish herd the chances are that the antelopes will all press on and refuse to be brought to bay at all. It is to be remembered, however, that few animals are more destructive among a pack of dogs than the sable antelope, which, using its horns freely and viciously, will do enormous damage in a very few minutes. Selous mentions having had four dogs killed and four others wounded in the space of less than a minute. He mentions also the case of one of Lobengula's Matabele hunters being slain by a sable antelope bull, which, on his approaching, charged him and drove its horns clean through the man's body. Where the sable has to be stalked on foot, in Central and East Africa and other localities, where horses cannot be employed, the chase is of course infinitely more fatiguing. Where there are to be found hills and rolling country, interspersed in the valleys with ant-hills, trees, and scattered bush, good stalking is at once provided, and the approach can, with due precaution, be made without any great difficulty. Such veldt is to met with in German East Africa, but sportsmen will do well to bear in mind the fact that German game regulations are at the present time pretty severe. The flesh of this fine antelope is but



BRINGING IN A KILL.



SABLE ANTELOPE BULL.

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poor eating, not to be compared with that of the eland, koodoo, or even the roan antelope.

A suitable weapon for sable and, indeed, for all the larger antelopes would be a .400 or .450 modern rifle, using smokeless powder and soft-nosed or hollow-pointed bullets. The .303, or even the smaller Mannlicher bullet, is, however, if a good shot is made, quite as efficient in laying low a sable or a koodoo as a red-deer stag.

The *Roan Antelope* (*Hippotragus equinus*), a near relative of the sable, is an even bigger beast than that fine quadruped. A good bull will stand as much as 4 feet 9 inches at the shoulder, while the cow measures 2 or 3 inches less. Although a grand antelope, exceeding its handsome cousin slightly in stature, the roan antelope lacks the picturesque beauty of the sable. Its colour, a grizzled roan, or reddish grey, is not so striking, while the horns fall far short in extreme length. The roan antelope's horns measure in good specimens from 27 to 31 inches, and occasionally reach as much as 35 inches. The record pair thus far measure  $37\frac{1}{4}$  inches. They are in the possession of Mr. P. Niedieck, and were obtained in the heart of Africa, on the White Nile. The coat of this antelope varies much in different localities and even in members of the same troop. Greyish, grizzled brown is the predominant colour, ranging from a pale grey to rufous, and even a dark brown, sometimes approaching black. The space round the mouth and muzzle, a strip in front of the eye, and a patch behind the eye are white. The ears

are very long, pointed, and drooping, and are decorated at the tips with dark tufts of hair. The neck and withers carry an upstanding, reddish brown mane. The form is robust, and the roan is altogether one of the sturdiest of all antelopes. It is also one of the most courageous, charging fiercely at its pursuers, and, with its strong, recurved horns, inflicting dangerous injuries. Roan antelopes usually run in smaller troops than do sable, and are seldom found numbering more than a dozen in a herd. More often than not from five to eight will be encountered together. In former days in South Africa they ranged over fairly open country, and in Gordon-Cumming's time, 1843-1850, were to be met with in Griqualand West, where little timber or bush is to be found. At the present day, south of the Zambesi, they frequent by choice open downs or grassy valleys, or clearings in the vicinity of thin forest and bush.

The range of this great antelope is a very extensive one, practically over all Africa, where the country is suited to its habits, from the Limpopo river to the Upper Nile, Nigeria, Gambia, and Senegambia. In different localities various sub-species, slightly differing from the South African type, have been identified. These, however, are to be looked upon as merely local variations of this antelope. The so-called Baker's antelope of the Upper Nile Valley, discovered by Sir Samuel Baker in the early sixties, is nothing more than the roan antelope of that region. I have seen some fine specimens of the roan antelope, shot by my friend, Mr. G. W. Penrice, in Portuguese

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West Africa (Angola). I do not find them differing materially from the roan antelope of South Africa.

Roan antelopes, in spite of their size, are excellent runners, and although somewhat cumbrous in their paces, will usually outstay and outgallop the mounted man. In forest and bush country, however, they are by no means very difficult animals to stalk, and they have, in common with so many other antelopes, that strongly developed curiosity which prompts them, even when followed, to stop, turn round, and have a look at their pursuers. On such occasions these antelopes ought not to be too much pressed ; if the hunter appears not to be greatly hurrying, they are as likely as not to pull up again ; and by dint of manœuvring for their line or cutting them off, a fair shot may be obtained. To follow these antelope successfully when on the move, especially if the hunter happens to be on foot, requires some considerable apprenticeship in the life of the wilderness. Only experience can supply this knowledge, and African hunting experience, especially when horses cannot be employed, is always certain to be hard bought. The Boers call the Roan antelope *Bastard eland* and *Bastard gemsbok*. Native names are, *Qualata* and *Tai-haitsa* of the Northern and Southern Bechuanas ; *Ee-taka* of the Matabele ; *Ee-pala-pala chena* of Makalakas ; *Mtagaisi* of Zulus and Swazis ; *Kwar* of Masarwas ; *Palanca* of Angola natives ; *Maharifar* *Abu maaref* of Upper Nile Arabs ; *Da kevoi* of Mandingoes ; *Gwenke* of Hausas. In high condition,

after the summer rains, the flesh of a youngish roan antelope is good eating ; that of the older animals is tough and tasteless.

### THE ELAND

The eland excels in stature and bulk every other antelope, and is, in truth, one of the goodliest of all beasts of chase. Its flesh is delicious, and reminds one of young and tender beef—having a gamelike flavour of its own. The elder beasts put on flesh amazingly and carry enormous quantities of internal fat, and the skin is in much request. For these reasons, and especially for the reason that it can be easily ridden down, the eland, once so plentiful all over South Africa, has been sadly reduced in numbers. Fifty or sixty years ago great herds of these animals roamed freely over the plains of the Orange Free State, the Transvaal, and Lower Bechuanaland. From these countries, as from Cape Colony, they have been long since exterminated, and even in Mashonaland, where, no great while since, they were plentiful, they have been terribly thinned out. The eland is, however, one of the desert-loving species, and can exist for months together without drinking. In the waterless recesses of the Northern Kalahari it still finds sanctuary, and is likely to do so for some years longer. In this country large herds of these magnificent antelope still range freely, and although the Bakwèna and Bamangwato natives make annual hunting expeditions into the desert, for the purpose of bringing





ROAN ANTELOPE BULL.



ELAND BULL—28-INCH HORNS,

John & Co.

out flesh, hides, horns, and fat, elands still manage to maintain their existence.

Of the Southern Eland (*Taurotragus oryx*, a new scientific name, which I am sorry to find ousting the old and familiar *Oreas canna*) two varieties or subspecies are found, the unstriped or desert eland, once frequenting all South Africa as far north as the Botletli river, Ngamiland, and the striped or Livingstone's eland (*T. oryx livingstonei*), found near and beyond the Zambesi, in Rhodesia, Angola, Nyasaland, and elsewhere. The unstriped eland is in these days generally supposed to be confined only to the Kalahari. Within the last few years, however, Mr. F. V. Kirby has found elands in Portuguese Northern Zambesia, the Lower Shiré district, and the Chiringoma country, Portuguese East Africa, which show no vestige of striping. As a rule, it is to be noted, only striped elands are met with in these countries. From British Central Africa and Portuguese East Africa the range of the striped eland extends as far north as British East Africa.

A very little known race of eland, carrying much larger horns than the common species, is known as the Senegambian eland (*Taurotragus derbianus*). This splendid species still, I believe, inhabits the interior of Senegambia and Gambia. Living specimens were imported and maintained at Knowsley some two generations since by the Lord Derby of that time; but to English hunters the beast seems to be now completely unknown. A journey to the Gambia, in search of the grand horns of this splendid species—

still better, of some complete specimens of the skin, skull, and horns for museums—would surely repay any enterprising sportsman-naturalist.

The common eland stands in these days, in fine male examples, as much as 18 hands, or 6 feet, at the shoulder, and weighs at most some 1500 or 1600 lbs. In the old days, when elands were common in South Africa, and sportsmen had far more choice than at the present time, still bigger bulls were occasionally encountered. Mr., afterwards Sir John Barrow, the well-known secretary to the Admiralty, a most careful observer, gives the shoulder height of an eland shot in northern Cape Colony in 1797 at 6 feet 6 inches, or  $19\frac{1}{2}$  hands. Personally, I see no reason whatever to doubt that record. The shape and coloration of elands is so well known, from specimens at the Zoological Gardens, that I refrain from giving details. It is worth noting, however, that in the wild state the species develop much grander proportions than in captivity, and the old bulls especially attain colossal proportions. These old bulls are literally rolling in fat and, when ridden hard, will actually fall dead from the exertion. Their hearts are enclosed in enormous masses of fat, and it is easy to understand that the violent exertion of a sustained chase may end in sudden death without the aid of the hunter's bullet. These patriarchs lose their hair to a great extent, and the skin, showing through, imparts a bluish aspect. The front of the face in adult wild specimens of the male eland is clothed with a thick upstanding brush of stiff, dark-brown hair.

To my mind there is no more beautiful sight in the African veldt than a troop of these big, sleek, prosperous-looking beasts. Although great in size, and often very fat and in high condition, the beautiful game-like heads and fine, clean antelopean limbs always redeem these animals from the charge of being little better than fat cattle. The eland is, of course, a true antelope, and a magnificent species; yet I confess I never look at a herd of well-bred Alderney or Jersey cattle, without being reminded irresistibly of the fawn colouring and smooth, sleek coats of a troop of eland. On the open downs and plains of Eastern Mashonaland only a few years since great troops of these splendid antelopes, numbering as many as 100 or 200 head, were to be seen grazing contentedly, like herds of prosperous bees. Even in the recesses of the waterless Kalahari I have met with troops of these animals numbering between 30 and 40 head; and although the season was winter and the veldt dry and parched, the beasts shot by my hunting friend and myself were fat and in most excellent condition. Elands, in fact, beyond all other antelopes, seem to possess the faculty of putting on flesh and prospering. This fact has, lamentably enough, been the cause of their downfall, wherever white men, horses, and fire-arms have appeared; and in South Africa alone many thousands of these splendid antelopes must have been shot within the last fifty years.

The eland is, to the mounted man, the easiest of all animals to run down. One has to do no more

than put one's pony to the gallop, and in ten minutes or less one has ridden close up to the stern of the big antelope, taken one's shot from the saddle, and brought down the quarry. It is as easy as—possibly easier than—shooting a cow. Yet the sight of a goodly troop of eland running in front of one is marvellously pleasing to the eye. The great beasts usually go off at a slinging trot. When the horseman, as he usually does, turns the eland he intends to shoot out of the herd, it will probably canter for a while. This becoming distressing, it subsides to the trot again, and the hunter presently brings it down. Elands are, however, far more active than one would suppose, the cows especially. I have seen cows jump bushes between 4 and 5 feet in height, and fly over fallen timber with great agility. They will even leap clean over one another's backs in the excitement and heat of the chase. These antelopes can occasionally be driven right up to the waggons and shot there. This is done sometimes with giraffe, but giraffe require a good deal more management, and only the skilled veldt man can accomplish such a feat. Elands have marvellously sleek coats, and, as one skins this game, a strong and very pleasant scent of fragrant herbs rises warm to the nostrils. The horns of the bull are shorter, but far thicker, finer, and more massive than those of the cows. A good bull's horns will measure from 28 to 30 inches—very rarely more—those of a cow from 28 to 33, and even 36 inches. Quite recently some exceptional heads have been secured from the White Nile and Bahr-el-Ghazal. These



DEAD ELAND, AND NATIVES—N.W. RHODESIA.



KOODOO BULL.



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measure  $39\frac{1}{4}$  and  $38\frac{3}{4}$  inches respectively. They have been referred to a sub-species to be known as *Taurotragus Oryx gigas*. The horns of the Senegambian eland reach as much as 40 inches.

Stalking eland on foot in Africa beyond the Zambesi is a very different operation from the easy chase of the South African eland on horseback. It means the approach of a suspicious and wary antelope, possessed of excellent sight and wonderful powers of scent, by a man fending for himself in a hot and exhausting climate. Still, elands are pretty often stalked and shot on foot in most parts of Africa. They frequent all kinds of country, open plains, thin bush and forest, grassy glades and clearings, rocky hills and valleys. They are the softest of all antelopes, and yield readily to a well-placed bullet.

Native names for the eland are, in Bechuana, *Pofu*; Kaffir and Zulu, *Impofu*; Hottentot, *Canna* or *T'ganna*; Masarwa bushman, *Doo*; Makalaka, *Ee-pofu*; Mashona, *Mofo*; Angola, *Gunga* and *Onevema*; Swahili, *M'pofu*; Mandingo (West Africa), *Jinke-Janko*.

### THE KODOOS

The *Common or Greater Koodoo* (*Strepsiceros kudu*), as it is one of the handsomest, is at the same time one of the most familiar of all South African antelopes. The magnificent spiral horns, attaining as much as 5 feet over the outer curve, and, in a straight line, from base to point, 4 feet, have always had a

special attraction for collectors and sportsmen. They are, in truth, magnificent trophies, and I suppose more koodoo horns adorn English homes and English halls than those of almost any other of the large antelopes. The koodoo, with its great stature,—a good bull will stand as much as 5 feet at the withers,—splendid shape, noble carriage, and grand horns, may be well called the very prince of antelopes. Upon the whole, I think, to the koodoo male—the female is hornless—may be awarded the palm over all competitors for grandeur of aspect and general beauty. In the opinion of the writer he surpasses even the magnificent sable, the great roan, the mighty eland, and the stately gemsbok. One of the finest pairs of koodoo horns yet recorded measures 63 inches over the curve,  $48\frac{1}{2}$  inches straight, and from tip to tip 49 inches.<sup>1</sup> These came from the Macloutsi river, Khama's country. Singularly enough, the second finest pair ever obtained by Mr. Selous came from the same locality. I never saw a more beautiful head than this—it is absolutely perfect. The horns measure  $60\frac{5}{8}$  inches over the curve,  $45\frac{3}{8}$  inches straight, and 33 inches from tip to tip. Koodoo horns vary a great deal in spread and sweep. Some have the curve ascending directly upwards; these measure little between the points; others, again, branch widely outwards and have a great span from tip to tip. A pair in my possession,

<sup>1</sup> *Records of Big Game*, Rowland Ward and Co. A head in the possession of Mr. F. H. Barber measures  $48\frac{7}{8}$  inches in a straight line, and one, shot by Mr. Selous, 64 inches over the curve and 41 inches straight.

although no more than 50 inches over the curve and 39 inches in a straight line, have a wonderful spread, and tape no less than four feet half an inch from tip to tip.

Koodoos are essentially bush-loving animals, and delight in country broken by low hills, where streams of water, plenty of bush, and occasional timber are to be found. As a rule they are met with in small bands from five to ten in number, but occasionally larger troops are encountered. In the woodland country fringing the Botletli river, Ngamiland, when I was hunting there some years since, one or two troops, numbering from twenty to thirty, were to be found ranging, curiously enough, the waterless forests in which we were hunting giraffe. No doubt these koodoos drank every other day or so at the river; but to do this they had a march of some 15 or 20 miles before reaching water. I have met with koodoo in another very waterless habitat—the Lower Molopo, in British Bechuanaland, where little if any water was to be found. This was shortly after the rains, however, and it is just possible that, amid the dense bush and forest of this region, these animals found a pool or two of water unknown to human beings. As a rule koodoo are looked upon by African hunters as among the antelopes to be found not very far from water.

Occasionally, in moving about from one feeding ground to another, especially when tempted by such luxuries as young grass and the like, koodoo may be found in open ground, where they can be run down

on horseback. This, however, happens not very frequently, and the koodoo is, as a rule, far too timid, watchful, and wide-awake to be caught napping in this way. If thus surprised in open country, a man mounted on a good South African pony can run up to a bull koodoo, and get his shot in two or three miles of galloping. Not so, however, with the cows and younger animals, which are pretty sure to make their escape. As a rule, the koodoo is a beast which lends itself far more to careful stalking than riding up to on horseback. In hill country, not too much bushed, where koodoo can be made out with a good glass while grazing, some beautiful stalking is occasionally to be got. At other times only a snap shot in thick bush and forest offers itself. On these occasions it is wonderful how the lordly bull, with his grand horns, sneaks off, leaving to the baffled hunter only a sight of the cows and calves forming his harem. It is, indeed, marvellous how the koodoo, encumbered as he is—or ought to be—by huge horns, can slip through what looks like impenetrable bush. Yet he does it, and does it easily and without effort, laying his head well back so that his horns rest almost upon his shoulders.

Thanks to their bush-loving habits and great watchfulness, koodoos are still common in many parts of South Africa. Even in Cape Colony some hundreds are to be found in the bush-veldt country of Uitenhage and Zwart Ruggens. From Bechuana-land and the Transvaal they are to be met with north, east, and west, over much of the continent of Africa,





TELEPHOTOGRAPH OF ANTELOPE ROANS AND WATERBUCK COWS.

extending to Angola in the west, and Abyssinia and Somaliland in the east. Koodoo meat is excellent eating, and the Boers make very good *biltong* of it. A good bull koodoo will weigh about 500 lbs.

The *Lesser Koodoo* (*Strepsiceros imberbis*) is, as its name implies, a smaller relative of the noble beast just dealt with. The colouring of the bull is a very beautiful blue-grey, the back ornamented with transverse white stripes, and the face marked with lines and spots. The animal has a whitish neck mane; but the fine fringe of hair along the throat so noticeable in the greater koodoo is lacking. The cows and young males are of a lightish-brown colour, with the striping not so marked as in the adult males. This is a very beautiful antelope, standing over 3 feet 5 inches at the shoulder, and carrying in the males spiral horns, averaging in good specimens about 28 inches over the curve and 22 inches in a straight line. Fine examples reach 35 inches and 26 inches respectively. The flesh of the antelope is by no means good eating. East African natives have a strong prejudice against it, alleging that it is poisonous and unwholesome.

The lesser koodoo is, like its congener, a bush and hill-loving species, and is partial to the jungly banks of periodical rivers. Although not very plentiful, it is to be met with in small bands of from two to four or five in Somaliland, Abyssinia, and British and German East Africa.

Native names for the koodoos are as follows:—  
Greater Koodoo: Hottentot, *Kudu* or *Koodoo*; Bechuana

and Basuto, *Tolo* ; Matabele, *Eebala-bala* ; Mashona, *Noro* ; Masarwa Bushmen, *Dwar* ; Swazi, *Itshongonons* ; Somali, *Godir* ; Abyssinian, *Agarzin*. Lesser Koodoo : Somali, *Anderio* or *Godir* ; Swahili, *Kungu* ; Abyssinian, *Sara*.

### THE BUSHBUCKS

We come now to that fine group of antelopes classified by naturalists in the genus *Tragelaphus*, but known more familiarly to the average shooting man as bushbucks. These include five well-ascertained species, all bearing a strong family likeness to one another, especially in the spiral twist of the horns. The five bushbucks then are the *Inyala* ; the *Bongo* ; the *West African Bushbuck* ; the *Situtunga*, a most curiously specialised, water-loving species ; and the *Common* or *Lesser Bushbuck*, of which latter there are various local representatives.

The *Inyala* (*Tragelaphus angasi*), which may be called the prince of bushbucks, is certainly one of the finest antelopes of Africa. Standing about 3 feet 6 inches at the shoulder, the ram inyala, with its long silvery, grey-brown coat, striped like a koodoo's, dark flowing mane, bright sienna-brown face, marked and spotted with clean white, and surmounted by fine spiral horns, and with masses of long flowing hair about the breast and quarters, is a marvellously handsome beast. The horns remind one of a miniature koodoo's ; they have a fine wide twist, are very sharp at the points, and measure in good specimens



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as much as 24 inches straight and 31 inches over the curve. The female, it is to be noted, like all the bushbucks and koodoos, and some other antelopes, is hornless. She stands considerably smaller than the male. Her colour is a bright red chestnut, with clear white stripings. These magnificent bushbucks have a somewhat limited habitat, and have up to the present time been chiefly identified in the thick bush country fringing the littoral of Zululand and Amatongaland, nearly as far north as Delagoa Bay. More recently they have been discovered on the western bank of the Shiré river, north of the Zambesi, and they may possibly be found in some other suitable localities of British Central Africa. As a rule the inyala sticks very closely to dense thickets and thorn jungles, only quitting this shelter towards nightfall and at early morning to feed. On the Shiré river, during the rainy season, so soon as the grass grows to a height of 5 feet or thereabouts, these antelopes quit the bush for a time and range in the grass. Even then, however, they are never very far from the sanctuary of the bush, should they need it.

Very few Englishmen have shot these rare antelopes. Mr. Baldwin had good sport with them years ago in the 'fifties, during his earlier journeys into Zululand and Amatongaland. Mr. Selous undertook a special journey to the country below Delagoa Bay in 1896, and was fortunate enough to shoot and secure fine and perfect specimens of the male and female. A pair of these are now in the Natural History Museum. The best time to get a shot at this shy and secretive

buck is at very early dawn, as soon as it is light enough to see the sights on one's rifle. It is necessary, of course, to secure the aid of natives who are acquainted with the runs and habits of these antelopes. Fifty years ago the inyala was manifestly much more plentiful than at the present day. Baldwin speaks of the ewes being then seen in considerable herds. Nowadays, at all events, these animals are seldom seen in parties of more than from five to eight, although Mr. C. R. Saunders, Resident Commissioner for Zululand, has seen together within recent years as many as sixteen in a troop. Of these, four were good rams. On the coast of Zululand, where they have been protected for some years past, they showed distinct signs of increase; but rinderpest has since swept away a good many of them, as it has decimated koodoo in other parts of Africa. When hunted with dogs inyala charge and defend themselves vigorously. They have plenty of pluck, and a wounded ram should be approached carefully.

The cry of the inyala is a bark like that of a bushbuck, but deeper and fuller in tone. The flesh of this buck is excellent eating.

The *Bongo* (*Tragelaphus euryceros*), sometimes called the broad-horned antelope, is the largest and heaviest of all the bushbuck group, a good male standing as much as four feet at the shoulder. The horns, typically bushbuck in shape and twist, are very stout and broad. The record pair, thus far, measure  $26\frac{5}{8}$  inches in length (straight), and  $32\frac{1}{4}$  inches over the curve. These are in the

possession of Mr. C. Beddington, and come from the Togoland, West Africa. The habitat of this fine antelope is from Liberia to the Gaboon, where it ranges chiefly in dense bush, feeding outside during the night, and being found occasionally in grassy glades and clearings. In recent years it has been discovered in East Africa, and specimens have been procured from the Mau Forest. Unlike the inyala, the bongo has a short, smooth coat like that of the smaller bushbuck. The rams are very handsome, bright-red chestnut in colour, well marked with five white transverse stripes, two white spots below the eyes on either side, and a white crescent upon the breast. Until quite lately, when it was obtained in British East Africa, no British sportsman had hitherto shot and procured specimens of this grand bushbuck. Its western habitat, it is true, is a feverish and unhealthy one ; but, in the dry season, this part of West Africa might be explored and shot through without inordinate risk. Still, West Africa, although its dense bush and forests hold plenty of game, is not a region much favoured of gunners, one reason, no doubt, in addition to its unhealthiness, being the impenetrable nature of the country and the difficulty of seeing the game which undoubtedly exists. Few specimens even of the horns of this great bushbuck have reached Europe.

The *West African Bushbuck* (*Tragelaphus gratus*) is sometimes known also as the West African harnessed antelope, sometimes as the West African situtunga. It is, undoubtedly, a near ally of the

situtunga, having the same curiously elongated hoofs, and frequenting the spongy marshes and flooded plains just as does that water-loving antelope. This bushbuck stands about 3 feet 7 inches at the withers, and is remarkable as having, with the exception of the situtunga, longer and more twisted horns than any of the group to which it belongs. It approaches, in fact, in this respect, very nearly to the koodoo, its big second cousin. The horns, which are stout and strongly twisted, attain as much as  $34\frac{3}{4}$  inches over the curve and  $28\frac{1}{2}$  inches in a straight line. The coat is thick, somewhat like that of a waterbuck, and, in the full-grown males, is of a very dark reddish brown hue, tinged here and there with black and grey. The face is spotted with white, the body striped, and the hind-quarters white spotted, as with others of this family. The young males and ewes are bright reddish yellow in colour. The habitat of this bushbuck is to be found in the northern portion of the Congo Free State, the Cameroons, the Gaboon, and some portions of Nigeria and the Gambia. It is a very shy animal, going in pairs, and frequenting thick vegetation in marshy districts. Hitherto this antelope has been almost unknown to European sportsmen. Sir Harry Johnston shot a specimen in the Cameroons delta years ago, and remarks that the animal did not seem to be able to move very quickly through the dense vegetation. The localities in which this bushbuck is found are, besides being singularly inaccessible, owing to the marshy nature of the tropical jungle, in which it secretes itself,

hotbeds of malaria, and it is scarcely likely that many British sportsmen will care to venture their lives in search of an animal so difficult of access and so elusive. Cameroons names for this buck are—(north) *Kawe*; Cameroons river, *Mburi*; Congo, *Nkaya* and *Nkoko*.

The *Situtunga* (*Tragelaphus spekei*) is, assuredly, one of the most singular of all the African antelopes. In horns, marking, and other characteristics it is a true bushbuck—yet a bushbuck which has completely adapted itself to a semi-aquatic existence. It must have taken long ages of the past to have effected this transformation, and the influences which induced the ancestors of this antelope to betake themselves to a watery existence must have been overpowering indeed. The *situtunga* is now certainly the most water-loving of all antelopes of the world, standing for the greater part of its existence belly-deep in liquid, and, when alarmed or pursued, going yet farther into the deeps, and, sinking itself below the surface, concealing itself as far as possible beneath some overhanging bed of papyrus reed, allowing only its nostrils to remain above water. The natives are well aware of this habit, and when Major Serpa Pinto made his journey from Benguela to Natal, they no doubt endeavoured to explain to him the *situtunga*'s methods of concealing itself. The explorer thereafter published in his book the extraordinary yarn that this antelope sinks itself for long periods, and is even able to sleep far beneath the surface of the water.

Livingstone seems to have been practically the discoverer of this singular antelope. In company with Oswell and Murray, he came across it on his first great journey of discovery—that to Lake Ngami in 1849. The animal is known to the Lake Bechuanas as the *nakong*, and by that name the animal was first known and identified. After Livingstone first reported the existence of the *nakong*, Captain Speke discovered a *situtunga*, varying slightly from the Ngamiland form, in the neighbourhood of Lake Victoria Nyanza. The chief distinction between these forms seems to be that the colour of the female of the southern race is a dark-greyish, sepia-brown, exactly like that of the male, the young being a dark bluish-black, while in the Nyanza race the ewes and young are both bright rufous. By some naturalists the two races have been separated, the southern form being designated *Tragelaphus selousi* (Selous' bushbuck), the Nyanza race, *Tragelaphus spekei* (Speke's bushbuck). The coat of this antelope is, it should be stated, long and somewhat silky. The males of this species have no stripes or spots on the body, but the young are banded and spotted just as is the typical bushbuck. The face of the rams is marked with a whitish spot on either side and another V-shaped mark below the eyes. The horns are very handsome, having two well-defined twists, and, among all the bushbucks, approach most closely to those of the koodoo. So much is this the case that the Trek-Boers, as they passed through the Ngami and Okavango regions, four-and-



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twenty years ago, and met with this antelope, christened it incontinently the "Water Koodoo." The finest pair of situtunga horns yet recorded come from Lake Mweru, and measure  $35\frac{7}{8}$  inches over the curve and  $28\frac{5}{8}$  inches straight. As with the lechwe, the hoofs are extraordinarily prolonged, and the underparts, from the false hoofs downwards, are devoid of hair. A good ram will stand about 3 feet 5 inches at the withers.

The situtunga is a most difficult beast to catch sight of, and an even more difficult beast to shoot. Quitting the swamps and reed beds only at nightfall, it lies up on some secluded islet, well sheltered by dwarf palms and reeds, to return at dawn to its watery haunts again. Even Mr. Selous, that most indefatigable of hunters, has never had the good fortune to shoot one of this species, although he has picked up a dead ram, manifestly killed in fighting, among the Chobi marshes, and the remains of another killed by a leopard. Paddling about in a native dug-out canoe among the vast papyrus and reed swamps of the South Central African river systems, the gunner, if he can persuade the natives to take him out, may perhaps run the chance of getting a shot at these most shy and retiring antelopes. But that chance is a remote one. The keen-eyed natives themselves occasionally spot one of these antelopes, where it has sunk itself from observation, and spear it in that position. And at times the reed beds are fired and the animals driven into the more open channels, where they can be assegaied as they swim

across. On some of the islands of Victoria Nyanza, however, these buck are found in great plenty, and can be more easily shot. In a couple of drives on one of the Sesse islands (Victoria Nyanza Lake), Mr. Ernest Gedge and Major Williams, R.A., shot no less than twenty-four head. The Chobi and Okavango country, parts of Congoland and Benguela, Barotseland, Lakes Bangweolo and Mweru, British Central Africa, portions of East Africa, and the Victoria Nyanza region, may be cited as the haunts of these curious antelopes. In addition to the name "Water Koodoo," the Trek-Boers sometimes call this animal the "*Water-schaap*" (water-sheep). Native names are *Situtunga* or *Puvula* of the Barotse, Chobi, and Zambesi tribes; *Nakong* of the Batauana at Lake Ngami; *Zowé* of Chilala and Chibisa countries, East Africa; *Chobé* or *Njobé* of the Waganda (Uganda).

The *Bushbuck* (*Tragelaphus scriptus*) is found in varying forms all over Africa, from the southern shores of Cape Colony to Abyssinia. This first-rate little sporting antelope has always been a favourite with gunners, and although, as its name implies, it is a habitant of thick bush, it can be nearly always secured with care, judgment, and some knowledge of its habits. In the eastern portion of Cape Colony and in Kaffraria and Natal, periodical drives are made, and, the sportsmen being stationed at convenient openings in the bush, the buck are driven up to them by a line of Kaffirs. Big bags are in this way often made. On these occasions shot-guns and buck-shot are invariably

used. Harriers are sometimes employed. The buck are, of course, driven down wind. The bushbuck ram, which alone carries horns, is a most plucky beast, and will charge furiously when wounded or at bay. With its sharp, strong, straight horns it can inflict severe injuries, and on one or two occasions fatal accidents have happened with this antelope. Stalking bushbuck at early morning or late evening, as they come outside the denser bush to feed on the young grass, is excellent sport. These buck are very conservative in their habits, and will repeatedly appear in the same spots day after day; and the gunner, wandering along the edge of the bush or forest with a small-bore rifle (.303 or .256), can often obtain some very pretty shooting with them. The direction of the wind is, of course, to be remembered, and the greatest quiet and precaution must be observed. The sport much resembles the rabbit-stalking of one's younger days, when one prowled with a shot-gun along hedgerows and patches of gorse.

The Cape bushbuck ram is dark brown in colour, with or without faint white stripes over the back and loins and a few spots upon the flanks and quarters. The Western bushbuck, found in West Central and South Central Africa, is of a bright red, profusely spotted on the shoulders, sides, and haunches, and bearing well-defined, white, transverse stripes. The ewes, which are hornless, are, as a rule, of a more yellowish-red colouring, with fainter stripings. In the Abyssinian race the colour is reddish-brown, with from six to seven white transverse stripes. The

East African bushbuck rams are dark brown, with the spots and stripes only faintly defined. The colouring and marking of bushbucks, in fact, varies greatly in different localities ; it is probable even that there may be sexual and seasonal changes ; and much information has yet to be gleaned in many parts of Africa on this head. A good bushbuck ram will measure from 2 feet 9 inches to 2 feet 10 inches at the shoulder, and weigh as much as 150 lbs. The horns average in fair specimens from 12 to 14 inches, but exceptional heads measure as much as 17 inches. An extraordinary pair from Lower Zambesia reach  $19\frac{7}{8}$  inches,<sup>1</sup> but these are to be looked upon as altogether abnormal. Bushbuck venison is excellent.

Native names are—*Inkonka* (male), *Imbabala* (female) of the Zulus ; *Imbabala* of Swazis, Matonga, and Barotse ; *Serolobutuku* of Northern and Lake Ngami, Bechuanas ; *Ungurungu* of Makobas ; *Mbawara* of Swahilis ; *Dol* of Somalis.

### THE DUYKERS

There are many kinds of duyker in Africa—so many that in a work of this kind it would be absolutely impossible to deal with them at length. In all there are some twenty species, varying in size, as a naturalist has well put it, “from a donkey to a hare.” Of the true duykers, which are most familiar to sportsmen, the

<sup>1</sup> *Records of Big Game.* Rowland Ward and Co.

common duyker (*Cephalopus grimmi*) is best known. Duyker is a Cape Dutch name, signifying "diver" or "ducker," and very well expresses the furtive, sneaking habits of this small antelope. Found all over South Africa, from the Cape to the Zambesi, its range extends in the west to Angola and in the east as far north even as Somaliland. No matter where one goes, so long as bush and covert are available, the duyker is pretty sure to be met with. It is not, like the bushbuck, a lover of the densest thickets and jungle, but prefers, rather, fairly open country clothed with scattered bush. In mountain districts I have met with and shot this antelope among the well-bushed kloofs and ravines, always in the bottoms of the valleys. It ranges singly or in pairs, and, lying concealed in bush or long grass, will often spring up from under the very feet of the hunter. Usually, however, it endeavours to creep away under cover of the bush, or plunges into the depths of the thicket and thorn jungle. These animals are practically independent of water, and I have met with them in the wildest and most waterless recesses of the dry Kalahari country, fat, and in good condition, in the same locality as eland, gemsbok, and giraffe.

As often as not, duyker are secured with the shot-gun; and most South African gunners, when out for a long day's game-bird shooting, will recall the bagging of one or more of these small antelope, when walking up francolin or bustard or guinea-fowl. They are fleet little buck, and stand very well before foxhounds, and, with the Bechuanaland hounds, when Sir Frederick

Carrington had them, I have seen excellent runs, both with the duyker and steenbok, as well as jackal.

The duyker stands about 22 inches at the shoulder, is in colour of a greyish-brown, having a yellowish or greenish tint, and carries short, slanting horns, about 4 or 5 inches in length. Between the horns grows a tuft of long hair. The ewes are mostly hornless; in some of the duyker species, however, the females are found bearing horns. This antelope is held rather in contempt as a sporting animal—mainly, I think, from its sneaking, dodging characteristics. The Bechuanas and Basutos call this duyker, *Puti*; the Zulus, Swazis, and Matabele, *Impunzi*.

The *Natal* or *Red Duyker* (*Cephalopus natalensis*), a small but handsome species, ranges through South-East Africa as far as the Zambesi, and is found chiefly in forest country.

The tiny *Bluebuck*—*Blaauwbok* of the Dutch—(*C. monticola*), one of the very smallest of all antelopes, is known to naturalists as the *Blue Duyker*. This odd little beast is scarcely bigger than a hare, and measures 14 inches at the shoulder. Of a smoke-grey, brownish colour, this tiny buck is found in dense cover along the coastline of Cape Colony and South-East Africa, its range extending westward to Angola. It is often shot in the bushbuck drives of Cape and Natal sportsmen. The horns measure no more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 inches; the record pair attaining the magnificent proportions of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The South African native name for this animal is *Ipiti*.

## THE CAPE ORIBI

This is another diminutive antelope, found in Eastern Cape Colony, Natal, Zululand, Barotseland, the Eastern Transvaal, part of Mashonaland, Zambesia, Nyasaland, and Mozambique. A lover of open grass plains and the grassy summits of hills, this charming little buck offers by no means bad sport to the gunner, whether armed with a shot-gun or rifle. To the man with the rifle, even if he is a good shot at other game, the oribi, speeding at first low through the grass, and then bounding into the air with rapid leaps, offers a sufficiently moving target, and the shot must be quick and the aim excellent to bring it down. Sometimes the oribi will squat, and the sportsman, armed with the "scatter gun," circling round it, much as one manœuvres round a crouching bustard, can get near enough to put in a charge of No. 2 shot, as it bolts off, and so secure it. When ranging the grass veldt for partridge and koorhaan, with a steady pointer, oribi are occasionally put up by the sportsman, and I have known them to be bagged even with No. 5 shot. On the hills they afford very pretty shooting, but they are difficult to make out, their colour, a yellowish-rufous, blending singularly well with the neighbouring ground. In the Pungwe river country these antelopes are said to be found in more bushy localities than elsewhere.

A well-grown oribi measures about 2 feet at the shoulder, and carries short, straight horns, measuring

in average specimens 4 or 5 inches. These most graceful little buck are extremely fleet, and a pair of good greyhounds find it a tough business, indeed, to run them down. The scientific name for this antelope is *Oribia scoparia*; the Zulus and Swazis know it as *Inla*, while the Basutos call it *Pulukudukamani*, the Swahilis *Taya*, and the Abyssinians *Miwaka*.

In other parts of Africa are found the Abyssinian, Peters's (a Nyasaland species), the West African, and Haggard's oribi—the latter discovered about Lamu, in East Africa.

The *Zanzibar* and *Livingstone's Antelopes* (*neotragus moschatus* and *neotragus livingstonianus*) are two other diminutive buck, closely allied to the oribis, found, the one on islands and the mainland near Zanzibar, the other in South-East Africa, from Zululand to Mozambique. They are tiny creatures, the former measuring 13 inches, the other 15 inches, and are usually picked up with the shot-gun.

#### THE GRYSBOK AND STEENBOK

These two small antelopes, both familiar at the Cape and in other parts of South Africa, are closely allied.

The *Grysbok* or *Grys steenbok* (*Rhaphiceros melanotis*) is, to my mind, one of the most beautiful of all the smaller antelopes; its bright red-brown coat, singularly grizzled with silvery-white hairs, rendering it a striking and conspicuous object and a very





*ORIBY RAM.*



*INSIDE A ZERIBA.*

notable addition to the hunter's bag. The short, sharp horns stand straight up from the skull, and measure in good specimens about from 3 to 4 inches. The grysbok stands about 22 inches at the shoulder, and is a trifle stouter in shape than its elegant little cousin the steenbok. It loves fairly open country, usually in the neighbourhood of hills and mountains, where covert is close at hand. These little bucks lie up a great deal during the day—from 9 to 4 o'clock—and are then difficult to move, unless one approaches within 30 yards or so. Like the steenbok, they are often secured with the shot-gun, or they may be stalked with a small-bore rifle towards sunset or early morning, if their haunts are familiar. Cape sportsmen pursue them with greyhounds, and often have first-rate sport with them. Even at the present day grysbok are quite common in the neighbourhood of Cape Town, so much so that the wine-growers of Wynberg and elsewhere are obliged to thin them down from time to time, in consequence of the damage done by these antelopes in their vineyards and fruit orchards. Most abundant on the littoral of Western Cape Colony, grysbok are found also in Natal, the Orange River Colony, the Eastern Transvaal, Gazaland, North Mashonaland, and the Zambesi Valley. I never met with them farther west than near Mesa, in Khama's country, on the verge of the Kalahari.

The *Steenbok* (*Rhaphiceros campestris*) is, with the duyker, the commonest and most familiar of all the smaller antelopes to be found in South Africa.

Wherever one may trek, from the Cape Flats to the Zambesi, it is certain to be found, in localities suited to its habits. Even in the driest recesses of the Kalahari, I have met with numbers of these little antelopes, ranging far from any available water supply. The steenbok is shot by the sportsman in search of game birds, even more repeatedly than is the duyker. Found on open, grassy flats, or among thin, scattered bush, it often gets up within twenty paces of the gunner, and is brought down with a charge of shot. Often secured with the small-bore rifle, it is hunted with foxhounds, and coursed by the Cape Colony farmers with greyhounds. These are swift little buck, but, like so many of the antelopes, are gifted with a fatal curiosity, which induces them more often than not, having run for a short distance, to stand and have a look at their disturbers.

A good steenbok ram stands 20 inches at the withers, and carries short, sharp horns, measuring from 4 to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length. In exceptional specimens the horns attain from 5 to nearly 7 inches. The females are hornless, as are grysbok ewes. In shape and appearance this delicate little antelope is perfection, with its slender form, small, beautiful head, and dark eyes. The colour is rufous-fawn, with a curious silver sheen, and pale underparts. The flesh, like that of the grysbok, is good if somewhat dry eating. This buck is sometimes known to the Boers as the *Bleekbok*. Native names are—Bechuana, *Puruhuru*; Zulu and Matabele, *Ingcina*; Masarwa, *Gai-ee*; Makalaka,

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*Ec-pennee*. The Basutos call it *Impulupudi*, the Swazis *Ingaina*, the Swahilis *Ishah*.

A slightly varying form of this antelope, known as Neumann's steenbok, is found in East Africa, chiefly about Kilimanjaro.

### THE KLIPSPRINGER

This most active and hardy little mountain-dweller is well known to sportsmen in many parts of Africa, occurring as it does from the mountains about the Cape to Somaliland and Abyssinia. It has been well styled the chamois of Africa, and, in its love of mountain solitudes and its marvellous powers of leaping and climbing the most impossible-looking cliffs and precipices, it is scarcely to be surpassed by any animal in the world. I have always had a peculiar affection for the chase of this handsome little mountain buck. It was the first antelope I ever shot at with a rifle. It is years ago, but I remember the incident perfectly well in all its details. I had just arrived in Cape Colony, and was stalking in the wild, mountainous region of the Witberg, between Graaff Reinet and the sea. We put up three klipspringers out of some bush, half-way up a mountain, and one of these I followed. Klipspringers are not easy shooting when on the move, racing up a stony mountain-side, dodging through bush, or leaping from one giddy pinnacle of rock to another. But they have a common, and to them fatal habit of stopping, on some high rock or other vantage coign,

and looking round for their pursuers. It happened so on this occasion. My klipspringer, the ram, suddenly appeared, as I was toiling up the steep mountain, upon a high, jutting piece of rock 100 yards away, framed in dark bush. I was using a small Remington military rifle—used in those days in the Egyptian army; the rear sight, a circular one, was not over good for game shooting; but the buck stood for several seconds, and I managed to get a bead on him and bring him down. He was a magnificent little ram, and carried the best pair of horns I have ever seen. They measure  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and are only excelled by two others mentioned in *Records of Big Game*—those of Messrs. Vaughan Kirby and the late H. H. Eyre, which reach  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches and  $5\frac{3}{8}$  inches respectively. I know no form of mountain shooting to compare with klipspringer stalking, especially among the fine hills of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, or the wild and magnificent interiors of the sierras of Cape Colony. The scenery is grand, the air is unspeakably clear and sparkling; and although, now and again, as I have shown, a klipspringer will offer a fair chance of a shot, as often as not he will give the gunner an infinitude of employment for his legs, and call forth the exercise of all his skill, care, and judgment.

A good klipspringer ram stands about 2 feet or a trifle less at the shoulder, and is of sturdy build and handsome form. The coat is thick and brittle, each hair being hollow, and of varied colour, the whole effect being a hue of speckled, yellowish olive-brown.



KLIPSPRINGER RAM



*SPRINGBUCK.*



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The feet are extraordinarily constructed, the pasterns being extremely rigid, and the hoofs deeply hollowed, blunt at the tips, and cylindrical, the effect of the combination being that the animal walks, as it were, upon the tips of its toes. No surer-footed beast haunts the mountain than the klipspringer, and he will leap 30 feet down a cliff-side on to some tiny ledge or pinnacle of rock with as much ease and calmness as a man will jump a hurdle.

These antelopes, although frequenting the higher mountains in Cape Colony, are found in some localities on the lower slopes, and even in the valleys. When thus encountered they always run for the hills adjacent. They usually move in pairs or family groups, but occasionally as many as seven or eight, probably a couple of families, may be seen together. The females are hornless. The venison of this little buck is among the best in Africa. Klipspringer (rock-leaper) or klip-bok is the Boer name for this antelope, which has the scientific designation of *Oreotragus saltator*. Native names are—Hottentot, *Kainsi*; Zulu, Swazi, and Matonga, *Ligoka*; Bechuana, *Mokabayane*; Matabele, *Ee-gogo*; Cape Kaffir, *Ikoko*; Transvaal Basuto, *Ikuni*; Masarwa Bushmen, *Kululu*; Makalaka, *Ingululu*; Somali, *Alakud*; Abyssinian, *Sass*.

### THE SPRINGBUCK

Springbuck are still, happily, in spite of much persecution, among the commonest antelopes in South

Africa. They are not to be found, it is true, on the Great Karroo and the northern plains in the uncountable myriads of seventy or eighty years ago ; but they are still there in thousands. In the desert north-west regions of the Old Colony, in the country still marked on the map "Great Bushmanland," they are to be met with even at the present day in enormous herds. Here the extraordinary *Trek-bokken*, or migration of these antelopes, is still to be witnessed, and the wild, primitive Trek-Boers of that region shoot hundreds of the buck during the annual movement. This *Trek-bokken* seems to be the result of some curious irresistible instinct, which impels the buck periodically to move together in one vast mass ; usually they migrate to the eastward, and it is pretty certain that the necessity of seeking fresh pastures is the mainspring of the trek. Bushmanland is an almost rainless piece of country, a land little better than sheer desert, and it may be, as some colonists aver, that the springbuck ewes are also impelled, in the trek eastward, by the desire of rearing their fawns on the fringe of the rain-area, where the veldt has been renewed and refreshed, and the young can be more easily provided for. Much more rare is the strange movement westward. Now and again, perhaps once in a score or two of years, the vast herds of Bushmanland springbucks move towards the sea. Whether it is that their instinct warns them that the rainfalls to the east have failed, no man can tell. As a rule springbucks can, and do, exist for months together without water. But once

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in a way, on the rare occasions I speak of, they seem as if they must drink, and away they trek. Not many years ago they moved westward, heading direct for the Atlantic, on the seaboard of Little Namaqualand. They trekked straight for the sea, entered the salt water, drank, and perished in tens of thousands. Their dead bodies strewed the sea-shore in one continuous line for a distance of thirty miles, and the stench of their decaying legions was so great that it drove the wandering Boers, who were outspanned near the coast, far inland. Mr. W. C. Scully, formerly Civil Commissioner for Namaqualand, and still an official of the Cape Government, is my authority for this extraordinary statement, which is not, as it sounds, fiction, but real and sober fact.<sup>1</sup> To reach Bushmanland, which is now the great stronghold of the springbuck, the best route would be to go by sea from Cape Town to Port Nolloth, a voyage of about thirty hours, whence the springbuck country is easily reached. The land journey by rail to Fraserburg Road, thence to Calvinia and the north, is a long and troublesome one.<sup>2</sup>

Plenty of springbuck are found in other parts of Cape Colony, but not always in the state of complete feral freedom of the wilds of Bushmanland. Often they are enclosed by the wire fencing which now surrounds the pastoral farmers' runs. Still, even on

<sup>1</sup> *Between Sun and Sand*. W. C. Scully. Methuen and Co., 1898.

<sup>2</sup> It is to be noted that a large tract of land in this region (Bushmanland), extending to some 260,000 acres, has been proclaimed as a game reserve, in which it is unlawful to kill, hunt, capture or pursue any species of game whatever.

these great enclosures, sometimes as much as 50,000 acres in extent, good shooting is to be obtained. In the Orange River Colony, and on the Transvaal high veldt, springbuck are still present in some plenty. To the west of British Bechuanaland, in parts of the lower Kalahari, and in Great Namaqualand, they still range in fair numbers. In Khama's country and Ngamiland, along the Botletli river, nearly as far as the lake, they are also abundant. In this region, especially about the neighbourhood of the great salt-pans, I have had first-rate shooting with these antelopes, and while crossing the plains the springbuck were usually to be seen grazing within a few hundred yards of our waggons. North of the Mababi river their range is checked, but to the westward, beyond Lake Ngami, they are found in Damaraland, Ovampoland, and in Portuguese West Africa, as far north as Benguela. Next to Bushmanland, in Cape Colony, probably the best wild springbuck shooting to be obtained at the present day is on the maritime plains from the Cunene river to Benguela. Here great troops of these graceful antelopes still abound. Behind Mossamedes their range inland is more extended. It is a curious circumstance that in this country springbucks are often found ranging freely over the mountains. In South Africa one never meets with them away from the flat plains, or open, rolling grass veldt. In Benguela and Mossamedes, during the season of the rains, they pasture close to the sea.

Springbuck shooting is most excellent sport, but

the gunner unused to South African conditions will often find it, for some little time, somewhat difficult to bring down his game. I have known even good English rifle shots waste large quantities of cartridges in their earlier attempts at stalking. The buck itself is not a big target. It stands fairly high on its legs—about 30 inches at the shoulder—but the legs are slender, the body is slight, and the coloration, under the blazing sunlight and the mirage of heated plains, does not lend itself to the gunner's aid. The difference between the marvellously clear ether of South Africa and the heavier atmosphere of Europe and other northern climates is also enormously great. Distances are at first very hard to judge correctly. All these reasons, combined with the fact that the springbuck itself is naturally a shy and wary antelope, render the first essays of the sportsman, new to the country, sufficiently difficult. Practice and experience, however, soon overcome these difficulties, and the newcomer, after no very lengthy apprenticeship, finds himself able to bag his buck with the best of them—colonial farmer or rough, primitive Trek-Boer of the interior. In the Old Colony, Transvaal, and Orange River Colony springbuck are often ridden or driven up to by a wide line of sportsmen, who approach them down wind. The buck make off up wind, and more or less difficult snapshots are obtained by the gunners. Sometimes the antelope will allow the gunner to approach within 300 yards; at others a running shot at 100 or even 50 or 60 yards may be obtained. A running springbuck, one of the

fleetest antelopes in the world, is, however, a desperately evasive target.

Springbuck stalking is, on the whole, the finest and most interesting sport. Sometimes the gunner can approach by the dry bed of a periodical water-course, or from behind some break or inequality of the veldt. At others he may use a well-trained South African shooting pony as a stalking horse, and make his approach in that way. A knot of grazing oxen is occasionally employed. On the whole I prefer the stalking pony, by the aid of which one can obtain a steady shot, lying down or sitting, at 300 yards. In South Africa of the present day the sportsman seldom obtains his shot much under this distance; but, in Benguela, my friend Mr. Penrice tells me he has killed most of his buck within 100 paces. At very early morning I have had delightful shooting at springbuck on the great saltpans of Ngamiland, especially about the lower reaches of the Botletli river. In the winter season springbuck in this region betake themselves, for the night, to the bush fringing the plains, and if the stalker rides out before daylight, and creeps quietly about on foot, he may obtain, as the light breaks, either in the bush glades or on the gleaming saltpans, some fairly close shots—say from 80 to 150 paces. These are rare exceptions, however, and the stalker must usually rely upon an accurately sighted rifle and his own steady shooting to bring down his game at about 300 yards distance.

Springbuck are among the most elegantly beautiful of all four-footed creatures. Nearly allied to the gazelles, they are placed by naturalists between these animals and the antelopes. The form is graceful, the legs are clean, wiry, and slender. The body colour is cinnamon-fawn, with a prominent side stripe, running from the shoulder to the thigh, of dark chestnut. The underparts are of spotless white, and the white face is marked with a chestnut streak on either side and a rufous patch upon the brow. Both males and females carry horns, lyrate in shape ; those of the rams being much the bigger, more annulated, and more robust. A good pair will measure from 13 to 15 inches over the curve. One of the most curious things about the springbuck is the fan-like blaze of long, snow-white hair which, in normal times, lies flat upon the hinder part of the back—towards the tail—partly concealed by the rest of the cinnamon coat. When the animal is excited or alarmed or at play it erects this blaze of hair, and, arching its back, begins to execute those astounding bounds from which it has received its name. Leaping with stiffened legs 8 or 10 feet straight into the air, it will perhaps speed away for a few hundred paces to execute another series. It may be noted that, even when shot at, springbucks will, more often than not, stand again after running a short distance, and the gunner is thus enabled to obtain another chance or two at his living target. The venison of this antelope is delicious eating—in the writer's opinion, quite the finest of all South African game ; and springbuck

bültong is by far the most esteemed of all the dried flesh of the Cape antelopes.

Native names for the springbuck are *Tsèpè* of the Bechuanas; *Eetsaypee* of Makalakas; *Ibadi* of Amakosa Kaffirs. The Benguela native name is *Menya*, while the Portuguese call the antelope *Cabra de Leque* (goat of the fan). The scientific name is *Antidorcas euchores*.

The most suitable rifle for springbuck shooting is a .303, or preferably the .256 Mannlicher sporting rifle. Expanding bullets are, of course, necessary.

#### THE GAZELLES

In North and East Africa are to be found a number of gazelles, all of which afford more or less good, if somewhat difficult, stalking. These animals all bear a strong family likeness, having fawn or rufous coats, slender limbs, and elegant lyrate horns, strongly annulated like the springbuck's.

The *Dorcas gazelle* frequents open plains, steppes, and low hills in many districts north of the Sahara.

The *Edmi gazelle* is a mountain-lover, climbing with great agility, and often found in juniper forests. Its habitat is Morocco, Algeria, and Western Tunis.

*Speke's gazelle*, notable for its curiously wrinkled nose, ranges the elevated plateau of Somaliland.

*Pelzeln's gazelle* is found in the lower Somali country, meeting the last-named species about Laferug in the Golis range.



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*Loder's gazelle* is a true desert species, found in the Sahara hinterland, from Egypt to Morocco.

The *Isabella* is another desert gazelle, found from the Red Sea littoral to Kordofan.

*Heuglin's gazelle* inhabits the uplands of Bogosland and Abyssinia, but is at present little known to gunners.

The *Red-fronted gazelle*, sometimes called the Senegal gazelle, is met with in Senegal and Gambia.

The *Rufous gazelle* is a little-known animal, specimens of which have been brought from Algiers by Sir Edmund Loder. It is a big gazelle, standing 30 inches at the shoulder, and pale chestnut in colour. It inhabits, apparently, fairly well-watered country, and is found in Western Algeria and the adjacent regions of Morocco.

*Thomson's gazelle* is an interesting species, found on the high and open plateau of Masailand and in other parts of British and German East Africa. It is a small species, standing no more than 26 inches at the shoulder; but the horns are very good, elegant in shape, strongly ringed, almost to the tips, and measuring as much as 15 inches over the curve. This is not a difficult gazelle to stalk, and the gunner can usually secure a steady shot by approaching it quietly on the open plains.

*Grant's gazelle* is a very handsome species, standing more than 3 feet at the shoulder and carrying extremely fine horns for its size. These horns have a graceful lyrate curve, and measure in the rams as much as from 25 to 27 inches. An exceptional

pair, obtained by Mr. F. J. Jackson, measure  $28\frac{1}{4}$  inches, while the record pair reach 29 inches. This fine species is widely distributed in East Equatorial Africa. Two races are recognised : *Gazella granti typica* of the interior of East Africa, and *Gazella granti notata*, found in the more northern parts of British East Africa.

*Peters's gazelle* is another large species, closely allied to Grant's gazelle, found frequenting the coast regions of East Africa. Grant's gazelle is seldom found within less than 150 miles of the sea.

*Soemmering's gazelle*, familiar to Somaliland hunters as the *Aoul* of the natives, is found about the Red Sea littoral through Somaliland and Berber to East Sennaar and Danakil. It affords very good stalking and is found indifferently on open plains or among scattered bush and low forest. This is a big, heavy gazelle, not so graceful in shape as many others of the group. It stands as much as 36 inches at the shoulder and weighs (clean) close on 90 lbs. in occasional specimens. It can be usually stalked to within 150 or 200 yards and affords excellent sport. The horns, not unlike those of the springbuck, measure as much as 20 inches over the curve.

The *Addra gazelle* is a large species, very little known to European hunters. It is pale in colouring, and is found in Kordofan, Dongola, and Senaar.

The *Dama gazelle*, one race of which is found in Senegal, Gambia, and the country about Lake Chad ; another, known as the *Mhorr*, in the desert portion of Morocco, is also practically unknown to English

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hunters. Both races are true creatures of waterless, desert regions.

*Clarke's gazelle* is a most interesting species, discovered in 1890 by Mr. T. W. H. Clarke in Central Somaliland, in the dry, waterless country of the Eastern Haud. This gazelle stands about 33 inches at the shoulder, and is chiefly remarkable for the extraordinarily long, slender neck, which is arched very much backwards. When running, the long attenuated tail is thrown forward and the neck thrust back, so that head and tail almost touch one another. The horns have a strong forward curve, and measure in fine specimens 12 or 13 inches. The *Dibatag*, as this gazelle is called by the Somalis, is, from having its haunts in waterless, desert country, not very readily to be got at, and comparatively few examples have as yet been shot.

*Waller's gazelle* is an even more extraordinary-looking creature than Clarke's. It has a still longer neck, and in the distance bears a curious resemblance to a miniature giraffe. Even close at hand, the expression of the head is very giraffe-like. The legs are long and slender, and the animal stands as much as 41 inches at the withers. The *Gerunuk*, as the Somalis call this most singular gazelle, is found chiefly in Somaliland and the adjacent parts of East Africa. It is not a graceful beast, having a slouching, furtive gait; when alarmed it drops its long neck and carries the head in a line with the body. It obtains its food chiefly by browsing, and, rearing its forelegs against the stem of a tree or bush, thus

reaches foliage at a high elevation. It runs in small troops, seldom exceeding ten in number. Very curious in disposition, and not possessed of the usual wariness of its congeners, this gazelle is pretty easily bagged. The flesh is poor, however, and the Somalis have a strong prejudice against touching it at all. The gerenuk is to be sought chiefly among stony hills and valleys, more or less clothed with thorn timber. The horns, which are set curiously low down upon the face, are distinctly gazelle-like and of handsome sweep. They attain as much as 16 or 17 inches over the curve.

For all the gazelles any of the modern small-bore rifles, such as the Mannlicher or .303, are suitable weapons.

#### THE BEIRA

This curious little hill-loving antelope, named by naturalists *Dorcotragus melanotis*, is found in Somaliland and the upper regions of the Blue Nile. Having some faint resemblance to the oribi group, it claims also kinship with the gazelles. It carries short, sharp horns, which attain no more than 3 or 4 inches in length. The body colouring varies from pinkish-fawn to bluish-grey; the underparts are white, with a dark lateral band between the upper and lower colouring. The head is rufous. The ram of these little mountaineers barely reaches 2 feet at the shoulder, and weighs little more than 20 lbs. These antelopes have much the same habits



SPEKE'S GAZELLE.



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as the klipspringer, and get about rocky hillsides and precipices in the same wonderful manner. They are, from their protective colouring, difficult to make out, and the stalker requires the aid of good glasses when in quest of them. Once located, however, they may be approached to within 150 or 250 yards—sometimes rather less. They are found usually at altitudes of from 2000 to 3000 feet.

### THE DIK-DIKS

These odd little antelopes are found in various parts of Africa, chiefly in Somaliland. One species, however, the Damaraland Dik-Dik (*Madoqua damarensis*) comes from German South-West Africa; while another, Hemprich's Dik-Dik, is located in Abyssinia. These tiny little buck, which seldom exceed 14 or 15 inches in height, have small, straight, sloping horns, and usually a tuft of hair on the crown. The most remarkable thing about them, however, is the nose, which is most curiously elongated—almost trunk-like in its development. Dik-Diks obtain the name by which they are now most generally known to sportsmen and naturalists from the Kassala natives. They are known to the Arabs as *Beni Israel*; the Abyssinian name is *Atro*. On the coast regions of East Africa they are known as *Paa*. The general colour is fulvous, or rufous fawn. These diminutive creatures can hardly be considered as of much importance to African gunners, who are usually interested in other and more important game. They run in twos

and threes, sometimes occurring singly. At early morning and before sunset, they may be shot with a rook rifle while feeding. At other times they are beaten up and afford rather pretty and quick shooting to the shot gun. They lie close and have at times almost to be kicked up.

Gunther's Dik-Dik (*Madoqua guentheri*) has the most proboscis-like snout (somewhat resembling that of a tapir) of all these little creatures. Mr. C. V. A. Peel, in his book *Somaliland*, says of it : "Length of male,  $21\frac{1}{2}$  to 23 inches ; length of horns,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches, 3 inches,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches. Females hornless. These tiny antelopes, which run about in triplets, and weigh less than a hare, are the largest of the Dik-Dik. . . . Colour of body grey, belly white, no red in body as in other two (Swayne's and Phillips's Dik-Diks), long hairs between the horns, back of ears and snout fawn, chin white." Major Swayne gives the Somali names of these three Dik-Diks as Sakáro Gwyu (Swayne's species), Sakáro Gol Ass (Phillips's), and Sakáro Gussuli (Gunther's). Major Cotton gives the weight of a Salt's Dik-Dik as 8 lbs.

#### THE ROYAL ANTELOPE

One more species, and that the most diminutive of all ruminants, closes the list of African antelopes. This is the so-called Royal antelope (*Neotragus pygmaeus*), the *Sang* of the Vey natives of Liberia, found in the forest and bush country of West Africa, from Liberia to Ashanti. This tiny buck stands not



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more than ten inches at the shoulder. Its colour is a bright reddish fawn, browner about the head, the chin and under parts being pure white. The horns are actually less than an inch in length, and are smooth and sharply pointed. This rare little creature is scarcely known to European sportsmen. It runs in pairs or singly, is remarkably active, scudding off with high leaps, and is best secured at close quarters with a shot gun. Two hundred years ago the negro name for this tiny ruminant seems to have been "King of the harts," and it has ever since been known as the "Royal antelope."





## CHAPTER VIII

### THE BUFFALO

By H. A. BRYDEN

FIVE well ascertained species of buffalo are to be found in Africa, all of them more or less closely allied. These are the Cape, the Abyssinian, the Senegambian, the Congo, and the Lake Chad buffalo.

The *Cape buffalo* (*Bos caffer*), with which I will first deal, has much the widest distribution, and is by far the best known to sportsmen. It is, beyond question, one of the finest sporting beasts to be found in Africa, and from its great size and strength, and the fact that when wounded it is one of the most dangerous of all game animals to follow up and vanquish, it will always possess peculiar attractions for the keen hunter. Formerly to be found in immense herds in many parts of the Dark Continent, the Cape buffalo has from various reasons declined greatly in numbers



CAPE BUFFALO.  
From a Drawing by A. E. Caldwell.



during the last thirty years. In South Africa it has been destroyed chiefly by hunters. But in East and Central Africa it has suffered eclipse mainly from the ravages of that fell disease, the rinderpest, which, entering Africa from Asia by way of the Red Sea, some seventeen years since, traversed the continent slowly from north to south, not only destroying domestic cattle, but sweeping away enormous numbers of wild game. Buffaloes especially suffered most severely, and perished by thousands. In the good days buffaloes were found all over South Africa wherever water, bush, and grass were to be found. South of the Zambesi they have been in most places exterminated, and except between the Chobi and Benguela, and in the country between the Pungwe and the lower Zambesi, are now very scarce. Curiously enough, these animals have been for years preserved in the dense jungles of the Eastern Province of Cape Colony, and, in the Addo and Kowie Bush, the Fish river thickets, and the vast stretch of bush east of the Sunday's river, are still to be found in considerable herds. To shoot a buffalo here, however, a Government license, costing £20, has to be obtained. A buffalo at this price may be considered somewhat of a sporting luxury, when it is remembered that the gunner, if he goes to the right country, may bag a score or so of these grand beasts for the mere expenditure of powder and shot.<sup>1</sup>

Probably some of the best buffalo shooting now

<sup>1</sup> He would, of course, have to pay the usual sportsman's license, which, however, entitles him to shoot many other kinds of game.

to be obtained is to be found in the Portuguese province of Angola, where this animal is still abundant and not much hunted. It is worth remembering that in this part of West Africa the Cape buffalo meets the Congo species. On the Coporole, Nimbo, Kuvali, and other rivers of this country, the buffalo is to be found in large herds. It is, however, usually met with in very thick bush, and the chase of game generally in this part of Africa is by no means of that pleasant nature which hunters experienced in the good days of South African shooting. The Upper Zambesi Valley, the little known country between the Zambesi and Congo watersheds, and other parts of Central Africa, form probably the best buffalo ground to be met with at the present day. A few years back the Beira province, on the south-east coast, was the finest buffalo veldt in all Africa. Enormous herds were to be found in the unhealthy country between the Pungwe and the Zambesi and about the Busi river. Incessant hunting and indiscriminate slaughter have, unhappily, greatly thinned the buffalo in this region, and although fair numbers still exist, they are diminishing rapidly. In a few years, it is to be feared, the Beira province will be as void of buffaloes (and other game) as are now the Limpopo and Zambesi valleys—regions where these animals, not long since, so greatly abounded. Small herds of buffalo are still to be met with about the Sabi, Nuanetsi, and other rivers of South-East Africa, and in the remoter parts of Mashonaland they may yet be found.

The Cape buffalo is too familiar a beast to need minute description. Standing about five feet at the shoulder, the bull of this species is a singularly strong, massive, and short-legged beast, black in hue, having a short face, large flapping ears, thickly fringed with black hair, and enormously massive horns. In the older bulls the immense bosses at the base of the horns are practically united and present a rugged mass of enormous thickness. The horns themselves measure, in good specimens, as much as 45 inches in width; one pair reach the huge proportions of  $49\frac{1}{2}$  inches. A stroke from a buffalo's horn, delivered with the enormous weight of the beast behind it, is, if in the region of a vital part, almost certainly fatal, and many a hunter has been slain or badly injured by these fierce and courageous beasts. The cows are of somewhat slighter build and carry less massive horns. The buffalo fears nothing, and, when his blood is up and he has been wounded or annoyed, is one of the most dangerous of all African game animals. Selous himself had, years ago, one of his narrowest escapes from one of these animals, which charged him, overturned horse and man, badly hurt the hunter himself, and so severely injured the horse that it had to be shot. After receiving a bullet a buffalo will probably betake himself to thick bush, there to conceal himself against the approach of the sportsman. Lurking behind some angle of the thicket, or even lying concealed behind some low patch of scrub, he will, without a moment's warning,

charge savagely at his pursuers, and unless the hunter is well prepared and can stop the charge by a bullet of sufficient smashing power, he may find himself in a very tight corner indeed. When coming straight on, the beast is by no means easy to get a fair shot at. The horns are laid back, and the nose held out in such a position that the brain is difficult, nay, almost impossible, to reach with the bullet. The heart and lungs can be penetrated if the hunter is kneeling ; but it is to be remembered that even this is, from the shortness of the animal's legs, a by no means easy shot, and that, when hit, the buffalo is one of the most tenacious of life of all African beasts of chase. Even if the bullet be a heavy one and the shot fatal, the animal may yet make good its charge and badly injure its assailant.

For this reason experienced hunters, even if they use small-bore rifles upon other kinds of game, prefer, when thus following up a buffalo in thick bush, to be armed with a rifle of heavy calibre—.10, .8, or even a .4-bore. Few gunners of the present day, however, care to be encumbered with so heavy and punishing a piece as the .4-bore ; and although Mr. F. J. Jackson has, in comparatively recent years, still made use of one of these weapons, not many hunters will care to follow his example. A double .8 or .10 bore is good enough for the purpose. Personally, I believe that one of the new smokeless-powder rifles of smallish bore, .400 or .450, delivering, as I have said, an impact of tremendous smashing force, is good



enough even for a buffalo at close quarters. The weapon, whatever it is, should be a double one, and the bullet solid. It is to be remembered that this animal has a very thick skin, and that bullets of the hollow-pointed express type break up too readily and fail to inflict the severe wound required. When aiming for the heart, the shot should be delivered low down, well below the middle of the body. The buffalo stands low, as compared with other game, and when seen standing in covert his aspect is somewhat deceptive. When lying down he may be killed by a shot planted in the centre of the forehead, just below the horns.

In approaching a herd there is no great danger, and the sportsman can usually obtain his shot without much risk. If the troop is a big one, however, it may happen that in their fright they may come galloping back in the direction of the hunter, in which case he may look out for a tree or some other safe shelter, otherwise he may be knocked over and badly injured. Shooting buffaloes in fairly open ground is by no means dangerous sport, and single animals or small troops can be approached without great difficulty. But even when a buffalo is down and apparently dead, he should be approached with great caution. Instances have often occurred where the apparently moribund beast has sprung to its feet and charged savagely just as the hunter came up. A dying buffalo nearly always groans forth a peculiar, querulous, moaning bellow, which can seldom be mistaken.

Buffaloes are seldom found far from water and bush, or dense reed beds. They associate in herds of from fifty to two or three hundred, drinking regularly at evening, when they bathe and wallow, afterwards feeding through great part of the night and early morning. They drink again in hot weather at sunrise, and after another graze betake themselves, as the sun gets hot, to thick bush and low forest, or the shelter of high reed beds, where they rest and chew the cud. For a short distance the buffalo can run as fast as a horse, but from his bulk and conformation he has not the staying power of the antelopes. Very often these animals are attended by tick birds, just as is the rhinoceros, and, as in the case of that creature, they find them of much service in giving warning of the approach of danger. The flesh of a young buffalo cow, fat and in good condition, is excellent eating—quite equal to good beef. The marrow bones, too, are delicious. The calves are dropped in most parts of Africa between the end of December and March. By the Boers the buffalo is called *buffel*. Native names are : Zulu, Swazi, and Matabele, *inyati* ; Bechuana, *nari* ; Barotse, *nadi* ; Swahili, *mbogo* and *nyati*.

The *Abyssinian buffalo* (*Bos caffer aequinoctialis*), is, of the other four members of this family found in Africa, by far the nearest ally of the Cape species. So near a relative is it, that good naturalists have been in doubt whether it is not merely a local variety of the more southern form. In appearance it is very similar, but it is nearly a foot lower in stature.

The body colouring has occasionally a ruddy tinge, and the horns are smaller, more flattened, and less formidable. The finest known pair of horns of this buffalo have a spread of 3 feet 8 inches, but average horns reach about 2 feet 6 or 8 inches. This buffalo is found in Abyssinia, the southern regions of Somaliland, and portions of the Eastern Soudan as far as the White Nile. In habits it resembles almost precisely its bigger relative, and it is, when wounded, fully as fierce, courageous, and formidable.

The *Senegambian buffalo* (*Bos caffer planiceros*), of which very little is at present known, is dark brown in colour, with horns much shorter, blunter, and thicker than those of the Abyssinian species. No English hunters seem as yet to have recorded their experience of this beast. Few have pursued or shot it.

The *Congo or Dwarf buffalo* (*B. c. nanus*) is found over a large extent of West Africa, ranging from Senegambia to Benguela. Over all this country, ranging a long way into the hinterland, it is widely distributed. Large herds seem to be unknown, and the animals are found most usually in pairs or solitary; occasionally, however, a herd of as many as twenty is met with. All over West Africa the beast is known as the "bush-cow"; native names are in Hausa, *bona*; Yoruba, *effon*; Igara, *effa*; Igbira, *aya*. This buffalo stands as a rule less than four feet in height, and has been well compared in general appearance with a miniature Alderney, being a compact, shapely little beast, quite devoid of the heavy appearance of the

Cape buffalo. The colour is warm rufous, in the young animals a lighter red, while the old bulls, having lost much of their coat, are of a dark-brown hue. The horns, flattish in front, curve rapidly upwards, and are much sharper at the tips than the blunt trophies of the Senegambian species. A good pair will measure a little under two feet over the outside curve. These animals frequent partially bushed country near water, lying up in thick covert during the hot hours. Apparently they are nothing like so dangerous a quarry as the grim Cape buffalo. Nigeria and the Congo State are probably the best countries to hunt them in at the present day. They are shy, wary beasts, possessed of the keenest scent and hearing, and extremely difficult to come across, and their trophies are in much esteem among West African sportsmen.

The *Lake Chad buffalo* (*B. c. brachyceros*) is almost unknown even to scientists. It appears to form another link between the Cape and the Abyssinian species. A pair or two of horns brought home many years ago by the famous travellers, Captain Denham and Colonel Clapperton, are to be seen in the Natural History Museum. The horns of this buffalo are more lunate in shape than those of the Cape buffalo, and much inferior in strength. They are also much smoother at the base, apparently completely lacking the rugged and boss-like development, typical of a good specimen of the Common buffalo. They are, on the other hand, more spreading than those of the Congo and Senegambian species.

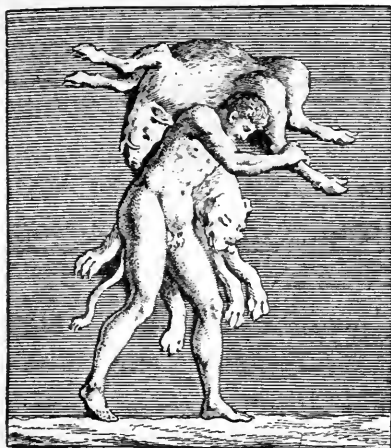


NATIVE WOMEN AND BUFFALO HEADS—S.E. AFRICA.



*A MIXED BAG—SOMALILAND.*

The best of these horns measure on the outside curve  $18\frac{1}{4}$  inches, and from tip to tip  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches. No British sportsman that I am aware of has ever yet shot this buffalo. Now that English influence has been established at Lake Chad, from Nigeria, we may expect to have more tidings of this little-known bovine.





## CHAPTER IX

### DEER, SHEEP, GOATS, PIGS, OSTRICH

By H. A. BRYDEN

#### THE BARBARY STAG

MANY, probably the majority of sportsmen, are unaware that the typical red deer is to be found in Africa. Yet this is the case, and the Barbary stag (*Cervus elaphus barbarus*), a very near relative of the red deer of Britain and other parts of Europe, is still to be found in parts of Morocco and Tunis. This fine stag may be said to be merely a local variation of the deer of Europe, with which, in ages of the past, when that continent and Africa were united, it formed no doubt one species. Its nearest ally at the



present time is the Corsican red deer (*cervus elaphus corsicanus*), which is a much smaller species than either the African or European forms. A good Barbary stag stands about 3 feet 10 inches at the shoulder, and in colouring is of a dark brown, somewhat lighter and greyer upon the upper parts. It carries fine antlers, which are usually to be found lacking the bez-tine. A grand pair, in the possession of Sir Edmund Loder, show eleven points, and measure  $38\frac{7}{8}$  inches in length over the outer curve. These compare very favourably with the finest antlers of our British red deer. This handsome deer is to be found at the present day sparingly in parts of Morocco, the east of Algeria, and the western forests of Tunis. In this latter country it was formerly much persecuted, but, thanks to preservation, is now on the increase again. In Tunis its chief habitat seems to be among forests of cork and pine. Sir Harry Johnston<sup>1</sup> mentions having been in at the death of a stag, some twenty years since, in this north-western region of Tunisia. It was followed on horseback and run down by Arab greyhounds. Few, if any, British sportsmen seem to have stalked this fine stag in any part of its North-African fastnesses.

#### THE AUDAD

The Audad, Udad, Arui, or Barbary Sheep (*Ovis lervia*), is the only wild sheep known to Africa. Found

<sup>1</sup> *Great and Small Game of South Africa*. Rowland Ward and Co., 1899.

in the mountains of the hinterland of the northern part of the continent, from Egypt to Morocco, it is a desert-loving species, choosing for its habitat even the barren, treeless ranges of the Sahara, where little vegetation exists. It affords very good hill stalking, and from its invisible colour, which blends wonderfully with its surroundings, is very difficult to make out, except by the lynx-eyed Arabs. The colouring is a reddish-grey, tinged with yellow, and from the throat to the forelegs, which themselves are heavily covered with hair, a long shaggy beard extends. The face is very ovine, but the general appearance of the animal reminds one strongly of the *Tahr* of the Himalayas. The horns measure, in good specimens, from 25 to 33 inches over the curve. This wild sheep is usually to be met with in small families consisting of ram, ewe, and two or three or even more young animals. A good ram stands from 3 feet 3 inches to 3 feet 6 inches at the shoulder, and is a wonderfully heavy and robust-looking beast.

#### THE IBEXES

Two wild goats are found in North and East Africa, the Arabian Ibex (*Capra nubiana*) and the Abyssinian Ibex (*Capra vali*). Of these the former species is met with in the mountains of Upper Egypt, and, it is believed, also in other ranges of Morocco and Senegambia. The horns are very fine, long and slender, with a bold backward curve. The best specimens yet recorded measure  $46\frac{1}{8}$  and 51 inches,

but average heads run from 35 to 38 inches. Few European sportsmen have yet secured this fine wild goat. Now that Upper Egypt is at peace and the Soudan conquered, we shall probably hear more of this little-known species, which affords undoubtedly some of the finest stalking in the world.

Of the Abyssinian Ibex still less was known, until quite recently, than of the Arabian wild goat. Until the year 1898 even the horns of this animal were almost unknown, only a pair or two in the Senckenberg Museum at Frankfort existing at that time in Europe. Major P. H. G. Powell-Cotton, however, in the course of a sporting expedition through Abyssinia made in 1899, was fortunate enough to secure a number of fine specimens of this wild goat in the mountains of Simien, in which locality, according to the natives, it is only to be met with. Major Cotton found this Ibex on mountains of about 4500 feet in altitude, where it appears to be hunted a good deal by native *shikaris*; after some hard stalking he succeeded in bagging four good specimens. Of these the finest horns measured  $42\frac{1}{8}$  and  $43\frac{5}{8}$  inches respectively over the curve. This Ibex was found to be somewhat like the Arabian species in general appearance, but having a shorter beard and stouter and thicker horns. The horns resemble most nearly those of the Asiatic species, *Capra siberica*. The coat of a good ram shot was dark chestnut, merging into silvery grey at the side, which in turn was separated from the white of the belly by a brown line. The head, chestnut-coloured

marked with grey, was noticeable for the great frontal lump found only in these wild goats. So persistently are these fine goats hunted by native sportsmen that it is believed they will become within a few years quite extinct. The Abyssinians of Simien, in spite of the passport granted by the Negus Menelek, placed great obstructions in Major Cotton's way, and were apparently only anxious to get him out of their country.<sup>1</sup>

### WILD BOARS

In Africa are to be found three groups of wild pigs, the wart hogs, the wild boar, and the bush pigs. Of *Wart hogs* two races, the southern and the northern, are known to naturalists. The differences between these species are, however, so trifling that the average sportsman is scarcely likely to notice them; it may, in fact, be stated that the northern wart hog is no more than a mere local variation of the southern form. The wart hog, with its enormous and disproportioned head, fleshy wens or protuberances (the "warts") on either side of the face, and enormous tusks, is one of the ugliest beasts in Africa. He is nothing like so fierce or so fine a sporting animal as the true wild boar, and he has a knack of going to ground in the cavernous earths of the ant-bear, which renders him a somewhat vexatious animal. From these

<sup>1</sup> *A Sporting Trip through Abyssinia.* By P. H. G. Powell-Cotton. Rowland Ward. 1902.

earths he can, however, be sometimes bolted by stamping about on the top. He is never hunted with the spear, as in India, and is always bagged with the bullet. The upper tusches grow to enormous length, and measure in good average specimens as much as 15 or 16 inches over the curve. An abnormal pair from Annesley Bay, Abyssinia, measure no less than 27 and 26 inches each. A full-grown boar will stand 30 inches at the shoulder. Found in most parts of South and East Africa, from the Orange River to Abyssinia, the wart hog is usually to be met with in dry country, partly open, partly covered with thorn bush and open forest. An expanding bullet from a .303 or .400 rifle is quite sufficient to account for this animal.

The *Algerian Wild Boar* is none other than the African representative of the common wild boar of Europe (*Sus scrofa*). Found in Algeria and Morocco, its habits, food, and general appearance are practically identical with those of its European congener. It frequents thick jungle and forest, and feeds a good deal on the acorns of the evergreen oaks of North Africa. In the heat of day these pigs lie up in cool and shady spots, and wallow in the mud with the huge delight of their race for this form of pleasure.

An average sounder of these pigs would be a boar and sow, and six or eight young ones. As the young pigs become nearly full grown they quit the parents and form herds of their own. In Africa, as in Europe, these boars are usually killed with the rifle. There is some risk in the charge of a wounded

or enraged boar, and occasional accidents happen. The tusches are moderately good, and rarely exceed 7 or 8 inches in extreme length. A good boar will weigh from 250 lbs. to 275 lbs., and will measure from 2 feet 9 inches to 3 feet at the shoulder.

### THE BUSH PIGS

Three kinds of *Bush Pig* are at present known in Africa—the common bush pig (*Sus chæropotamus typicus*), the Abyssinian bush pig (*Sus chæropotamus hassama*), and the West African bush pig, or Red River hog (*Sus chæropotamus porcus*).

The *Common Bush Pig* of South-East Africa is typical of the first two species. Varying from a dark greyish-brown to reddish-brown in colour, it stands from 31 to 34 inches at the shoulder, weighs about 235 lbs., and carries tusks measuring 6 or 7 inches in length. The ears are tufted and tapering. It bears a bristling mane, and the cheeks and tail are tufted. These pigs are found from the eastern parts of Cape Colony, throughout South-East Africa, as far as the Zambesi. They inhabit broken, bushy country, often afforested, and always well watered. They are seldom seen in daylight, feeding usually at night in herds of from four to five to as many as a score in number. They are strong, courageous beasts, showing, as a rule, more grit than the wart hog, and fighting vigorously when cornered. The Swazis and Zulus, and occasionally an adventurous Englishman in search of novelty, hunt them with





WART HOG.



spears, and some very lively tussles usually ensue when a bush pig is fairly cornered. Sometimes, but not very often, owing to the fact that the beasts seldom quit their impenetrable bush, except by night, they fall to the rifle of a European. The flesh of this boar, as of the wart hog, is moderately good eating.

Of the Abyssinian bush pig very little is at present known. Some authorities refer it to the common species, others view it merely as a local variation of the West African race.

The *West-African Bush Pig* differs chiefly from the bush pigs of South, Central, and East Africa in its very handsome colouring—a bright reddish-brown or reddish-yellow. The forehead, ears, and limbs are blackish, while the mane, parts of the ear margins, the ear tufts, and streaks above the eyes are white. Altogether this is one of the finest-looking hogs in the world. It is, like its congeners, bush-loving in its habits, and is seldom met with far from water. Its habitat ranges from Angola to Senegambia, and it is found as far eastward in Tropical Africa as the Monbuttu country.

## THE OSTRICH

Ostriches are common in most parts of Africa, where wide open plains or plains clothed with scanty bush are to be found. These birds are, of course, tremendous runners, and a single hunter, mounted on a good horse, has small chance of riding them down. They run usually, however, in a wide ring,

and it is possible at times, by cutting off corners, to get a running shot within a hundred or two hundred yards. Now that ostrich farming is so largely pursued in Cape Colony and elsewhere, this bird is not nearly so vigorously hunted for its feathers as was formerly the case. In many parts of South Africa it is still an exceedingly common bird. In the desert north-west region of Cape Colony good troops still wander, and the Kalahari is a veritable stronghold of these birds. Wild feathers are, if in good condition, finer and more valuable than those of the tame bird ; and when ostrich-hunting was pursued in the good days relays of well-mounted Hottentots or Bushmen, stationed far apart, were sometimes employed by up-country hunters and traders to run the great birds down. By this means a whole troop of ostriches were chased to the point of exhaustion and shot. The Bushmen of the Kalahari still stalk the ostrich, habited in the skin of one of these birds, and, using the stuffed head and neck with extraordinary skill, so well imitate the bird that they are enabled to approach a wild troop and shoot the best specimens with their poisoned arrows.

Ostrich shooting is a by no means easy form of sport, and even a fine rifle-shot finds it a matter of great difficulty to bring down these fleet and suspicious creatures. The best way to secure a good cock is to locate a nest—usually the sitting hen betrays herself,—and then, ensconcing oneself behind a low extemporised screen or shelter—a “hock,” as the colonists call it,—wait patiently for the approach

of the male. In this way a fairly easy shot can be obtained, and occasionally both birds are bagged. It sometimes happens that an ostrich may be stalked on a plain where bushes offer suitable cover and careful approach can be made. These birds have an exquisite sense of smell and wonderful eyesight, and the stalker who can manage to outmanœuvre them well deserves his booty. In South Africa the feathers of a good wild cock, in fine plumage, are worth from £20 to £25; those of a good hen about £10. The egg of an ostrich is naturally somewhat coarse, but it makes excellent omelettes and pancakes, and a wild nest is usually greeted by the up-country wayfarer with much contentment. An ostrich egg weighs about 3 lbs., and is equal to twenty-four or twenty-six hen's eggs. Ostriches at times, especially at early morning, produce a strange booming sound, which has been likened to the roaring of the lion. There is, certainly, a similarity between the two sounds; but no native or Boer will mistake the note of an ostrich for that of a lion, and most Europeans, familiar with the voice of either animal, are able at once to detect the difference.

Some five species of ostrich have at present been determined; but hitherto scientific naturalists have not paid much attention to this subject. Those at present known are: the common ostrich (*Struthio camelus*), the South African ostrich (*S. australis*), the Somaliland ostrich (*S. molybdophanes*), and the Masailand ostrich (*S. massaicus*). The tendency of the naturalist, however, is certainly towards a multiplica-

tion of the species, which finds no favour with the sportsman. Reference has been made already to the former subdivisions of the lion into species, which have been now acknowledged generally to be no more than local varieties. The case is similar with other kinds.





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PART II

ASIATIC BIG GAME









DESCENDING THIAN SHAN MOUNTAINS.



## CHAPTER X

### HINTS WHEN HUNTING IN ASIA

By Major C. S. CUMBERLAND

ASIA is the home of the three biggest sheep in the world, *Ovis ammon* (Siberia), *Ovis poli* (Pamir region and Chinese Turkestan), *Ovis hodgsoni* (Tibet). Their habitats on these three sections of the continent are similar in every way with respect to climate, vegetation, and natural features of the ground. Altitude, however, is relative to latitude—that is to say, where, as in Tibet, the habitat of the sheep is never under 15,000 feet, in the Tian Shan the *poli* is to be found at 10,000, or even lower; and in the Altai the *ammon* is found at 5000 or 6000 feet.

The habits of the three varieties are similar. The

rams in summer, until the rutting commences in the late autumn, run apart from the females, in small herds on easy, undulating, hilly regions, the grass on which they feed growing in tufts between stones. The females, on the other hand, may be found in large herds; they frequent the same sort of ground as the rams, but when the lambs are dropped they move into more precipitous slopes which are not so much frequented by wild dogs and wolves.

In the wild sheep, sight, hearing, and smell are largely developed, and owing to the very clear atmosphere and undulating features of the country, and sky-lines mostly unbroken, the stalking of the sheep is not quite as easy as stalking a stag in Scotland. A near approach is often impracticable, and shots between 200 and 300 yards, an outside range for stalking at home, have to be taken. It may be mentioned, however, that in the high plateaux of Asia 200 yards is quite a different range in point of vision from what it is in Scotland. Moreover, a rifle sighted at sea-level will shoot high at 10,000 feet; therefore an error in judgment of distance will be compensated for in this way, and very good practice may be made at 300 yards. A single barrel small-bore, with soft-nosed bullets burning nitro powder, will be found most useful for this work, as it is light to carry and more accurate.

The outfit for all parts of high Asia is practically the same for any one who means business and yet likes to be comfortable—one square, double-poled, single fly-tent with three foot walls made of green

Willesden canvas. For servants, what Edgington calls a patrol tent, which is simply the same as the former, only on a smaller scale, is very suitable. One more of these may also be carried for light-marching order when small expeditions are made from the main camp. For the large tent a camp-bed and folding table and chair may be taken, and for light-marching order an air-bed of the stoutest make and largest size should be taken, for besides being a most comfortable bed to sleep on when camped on hard or wet ground, if two be carried in the outfit they will be found most useful in negotiating unfordable rivers where no boats are available. A framework can be made of tent-poles, willow, tamarisk, or what not, lashed on to the two inflated air-beds, and a raft good enough to cross most rivers can be made. Rafts of this sort are made by Asiatics, who use inflated goat-skins instead of air-beds for flotation. Ground-sheets and kit-bags of Willesden canvas are also most useful and durable.

For shooting in India, where camel, cart, or elephant transport can be procured, double fly-tents, which can be made better in India than anywhere else, should be taken. The sportsman should always bear in mind that the more comfortable he is in camp, the more work he can do when he is out, and the longer he can go on with it. For the same reason he should outfit himself well in the way of food. If a horse is worked hard he should be well fed and stabled, and this rule applies equally to man and beast. The system of roughing it is all very

well on emergency, but in the long run it does not pay.

Food supply is an important matter. Tibet, Turkestan, Mongolia may be termed a mountainous desert region—at all events the parts of it frequented by the wild sheep. Anything like fruit berries or green food is not to be found. A good supply of Californian dried fruit and vegetables should be taken, plenty of bacon, tinned butter, tea and sugar, rice and flour. Baking powder is most important, for a course of unleavened bread will soon upset the stomach of the ordinary white man. Tinned milk is also very useful ; if not taken with tea it is always good to make puddings. Sardines and potted meat, macaroni, cheese, and a good supply of jam and marmalade are needed.

As for dress, a Norfolk jacket and knickerbockers of good Scotch tweed or Cashmir “puttoo,” a Terai or double wide-awake hat, with a cap in the pocket for stalking, are all wanted. Boots are very important for Asiatic shooting. The best in the world are Scafe’s patent. They can be put on any boots. Care should be taken that the india-rubber tabs should project well from the sole, otherwise they do not grip the ground sufficiently. On grass slopes, wet or dry, loose rubble and rocky *débris*, flat rock, cliff-climbing, snow, or ice, there is nothing better. They are silent withal—a most important point in stalking the sheep. A pair of knee-boots lined with fur or sheepskin, to wear in camp at night, are absolutely essential, for in most parts of Asia wood for a camp fire is not

procurable. On some occasions a hot-water bottle, made of india-rubber, which is nothing to carry, comes in very useful. A folding bath of the same material is also necessary. As for cooking-pots, etc., this should be left to a certain extent to the cook. Those made of aluminium are the lightest and cleanest.





## CHAPTER XI

### SHEEP AND GOATS

By Major C. S. CUMBERLAND

#### CAPRA AEGAGRUS

THE same goat and sheep is to be found in Asia Minor, Daghestan, in Caucasus, and throughout Persia and Beloochistan, especially in the mountains that extend on the eastern shores of the Persian Gulf. The shape or rather sit of the horns varies a little in different localities. In Northern Persia the horns of the goats are rather thicker than they are in the south, their habits and the nature of the ground they inhabit are identical. The rutting season, how-



ever, varies. In North Persia they rut in December, and in Scind (their southern limit) in April.<sup>1</sup>

## OVIS VIGNII

GUD, in *Scind* ; OORIAL, *Punjab* ; OORIN, *Gilgit* ; SHAPOO  
LADAK GOOCH, *Persia*

The gud of Scind is one of the numerous varieties of the smaller wild sheep whose habitat, commencing in Corsica with the moufflon, extends throughout Asia Minor and Persia to the Scind Frontier, and from thence throughout the Salt Range into Chitral, up the Indus Valley as far as Ladak. This is its limit, and its place is here taken up by the *Ovis hodgsoni*, one of the three great wild sheep of Asia. A line may be drawn across this district which absolutely divides the two, and on this line one or two hybrid specimens, a cross between the two sheep, have been obtained, the horns of which are thicker than those of the Asser sheep, but the general characteristics of shape, make, and colour are the same. In fact they so closely resemble the shapoo *Ovis vignii*, that when I shot one that I found running with a herd of Hodgsoni, until I had him dead on the ground and examined his horns, I thought he was a shapoo pure and simple.

<sup>1</sup> For use on the Scind frontiers a double fly-tent is necessary, as, owing to the barren nature of the hill country, shade under which to pitch a small tent is not often available. Supplies, especially soda water (for the water in the range is poisonous) should be sent up from the nearest railway station periodically, communication being kept up by a trotting camel, who will cover 50 miles in a day.

## IBEX AND WILD SHEEP IN SCIND

In the range of hills running down the frontier of Scind to the coast there is very pretty shooting, consisting of what is commonly called Scind ibex (*Capra aegagrus*) and gud (*Ovis vignii* of that region). As a rule they are hunted by driving up to posted guns—a practice which ought to be abolished, as it is poor sport for the shooter, and very hard on the game. However, as the ground is difficult except to a mountaineer, and the animals require a good deal of stalking, many sportsmen would not care for it.

In 1895, on my way home *via* Karachi, I made up my mind for a hunt in the Scind and Beloochi hills. I took the rail to Lar Kharna from Lahore, got some camels, and started for Guibidero, which I heard was a good place for sheep and goats. A couple of days took me to my ground, and I camped on a little stream running through one of the typical gorges of this country—rugged, abrupt, with broken serrated sky-lines, steep slopes, or rather slips, of debris or loose rocks, very bad to walk over. This is the ground on which the goats abide. As there is no wind to speak of, no trees, and no water except very small trickling streams at rare intervals, the stillness is intense, and a displaced stone will make a noise like a pistol shot as it falls.

The sportsman should be on the hill and in a commanding situation before daybreak; the herds



"BOZE KUH" — PERSIA.



*CAPRA ÆGAGRUS.*  
("SARAH") — SIND.



*OVIS VIGNII* ("SHAPOO") - LADAK



*OVIS VIGNII* ("OORIN") GILGIT.

are then on the move and can be identified. When lying up for the day, even if you can find them, they are generally so situated that to get within shot is very difficult. I was, therefore, the morning after arrival, well up on the ridge by daybreak, overlooking a plateau covered with tufts of grass and low bushes, where my hunter said we should certainly see goats. So we sat down and used our binoculars. Presently the shikari made a click with his tongue and pointed. I made them out, moving about a mile off on the ground which sloped up from the plateau to our ridge. There was no chance of a stalk where they were. He said they would probably feed up to the ridge, and then, perhaps, lie down on the reverse, which was one side of the gorge in which my camp was pitched. So I waited and watched ; fortunately they worked our way, and, after pottering about for an hour, they all reached the edge of the gorge. There they stood looking over and gazing intently for some time ; they then made up their minds and popped over, one after another. Now was my chance. Away I went as hard as I could, my soft leather "chuplies" or sandals making no noise, and when I got to the place where they had disappeared, I lay down for a minute to get my breath. When I felt quite steady I crawled up to the edge and looked over. There they were, just below me, some lying down, and some standing gazing intently at my camp, which lay about 2000 feet immediately below. To my disappointment I found that there was not a head amongst them worth having.

I found out afterwards that, in the distance, if there was a decent buck in a herd, he showed almost white compared with the rest. They were about a hundred yards below me among some broken rocks, so I lay and watched, in the hope that a good buck might yet appear. All of a sudden there was a sharp hissing whistle—their note of alarm, and in a moment they were out of sight. I wondered, for I was sure I had done nothing to alarm them. Suddenly at my very feet up jumped a leopard. I threw up my rifle, and knocked him over like a rabbit. It was the greatest luck in the world, for he gave me no time to think about it, and he was the last beast I expected to see. At the sound of my shot up came my shikari. "Is he dead, Sahib?" "Yes," I said, "go and cut his throat, and make him lawful (halal karo)." Down he jumped over the rocks, knife in hand, thinking to find an ibex ready for the knife. Instead of which he jumped—bang—on the top of the leopard, who was fortunately as dead as a stone. Having skinned the beast, as the sun was getting warm I retreated under a rock and ate my breakfast. After which, as I had been up very early, I had a sleep to pass the time until evening, when the goats get on the move again. At about four I made a fresh start. The plateau I was on was fairly extensive, and was intersected by numerous depressions bushed over pretty thickly in some places. If I could only get a goat amongst these I might make a good stalk. Presently we looked down into one of the nullahs rather wider than the

rest, and there, just across, scratching his back on a rock, was a really good ibex. He presented quite an easy shot broadside on, and so I pulled off at once. Away he went up the opposite side and out of sight, and another one with him that I had not seen before. Before I could get another cartridge in they were out of sight. Imagine my feelings! "Is the joy of killing worth the risk of the intense mortification of missing an easy shot?" Often have I asked myself that question. "Well, I may as well see where they have gone," so I ran across the nullah. When I got half way up the opposite slope my spirits revived with a bound. There was blood on the trail. My reputation was saved! A hundred yards farther on, over the top, lay my ibex, stone dead. On my way home, looking across the big gorge in which was my camp, I made out a herd of something which my shikari said were gud, as they call the small sheep of this region, feeding on what appeared to be a plateau similar to the one I was on.

As day broke the next morning we were on our ground. My shikari told me I should surely find the gud on the same spot, as they are very local so long as they get what they want in the way of grass. Sure enough, there they were. Five good rams, not a ewe amongst them. This sheep has got a wonderful eye, to say nothing of nose and ears, so I had to be very careful of my approach. I told the shikari not to move unless I called him, however long I took doing my job. Fortunately, there was absolutely no wind, but the stillness of the air was intense. I

pulled off my sandals and crept in my leather socks, worn under the chuplies, through the bushes and rocks which were scattered about. As luck would have it, the sheep always moved away from me. At last, what scared them I cannot say, but all of a sudden up went their heads and they came down on me like a charge of cavalry. This happened so suddenly that I hardly knew which to shoot at. If I had had my double rifle in hand instead of the single I might have shot right and left, as I would at driven partridges. As it was, with my single, which is never good for running shots, all that I can say is that I did knock one over, but he got up again. I got in two more shots as they went off, with no result. The beast I knocked over went on strong with the rest. I must say I felt sick. However, there was nothing for it but to follow on as long as blood gave us the trail. On reaching the edge of the plateau we sat down to spy, as our view was pretty extended ; after a minute or two we fixed them. One, two, three, four ! Where was the fifth ? That was mine. After a careful examination of the ground between the herd and ourselves we could not make him out, so concluded that he was lying down. We got on the trail once more, and had not proceeded more than a few hundred yards down the slope when up he jumped, quite close to me, from behind a rock. This time I got in a good shot, and dropped him in his tracks.

*Ovis vignii* is only a variety of the oorial of the Salt Range. The chief difference is in the bend of





*OVIS VIGNII* ("OORIAL")—SALT RANGE.



*OVIS VIGNII* (GOOCH)—PERSIA.



*OVIS POLI* ("GULGIAR")—PAMIR.



*OVIS POLI*—TAG-DUMBASH.

the horns, which curve outwards and downwards, so that in facing you the whole of the horn is seen, whereas with the oorial the curve is more backward and downward. The next variety of this sheep is found in the Gilgit district of the Himalayas; oorin is the local name. The male carries no neck mane, and the horns slope upward and backward—in fact, are straighter and look longer.

IN QUEST OF *Ovis Poli*

Roughly speaking, the 35° N. latitude divides the region frequented by *Ovis poli* and *O. hodgsoni*. Here is a broad belt running across Asia where neither the one nor the other are to be found. I have never heard of the latter north of the Yarkand-Kilian road, or of the former south of the Taghdumbash Pamir. Ibex and burhel are to be found in fair numbers, but none of the big sheep. In 1889, having with some trouble procured a passport from Peking to enable me to travel in Chinese Turkestan, I set out with my friend Bower on June 22. After the usual delays and difficulties which invariably occur in travelling in an unknown region where high passes and big rivers (without boats or bridges) have to be crossed the best way you can, we had to ferry across some big rivers on what are called in that country “zacks,” *i.e.* rafts made of light framework of willow and tent poles floated on about a dozen inflated goat skins, which are easily packed and carried along for the purpose. Since then I conceived a much better

plan for the same purpose : instead of goat skins I employ in the same way a couple of air-beds, which are easier to carry than the former, and very comfortable to sleep on. With these you can make a raft capable of floating a considerable cargo.

We arrived towards the end of August at our destination, the Taghdumbash Pamir, where we intended to begin our hunt for poli. As this place has been visited nearly every year since then by some sportsmen, and has been described so often by abler pens than mine, it would be useless for me to repeat. Having met the beg or chief of the district where the Taghdumbash joins the Serikul, and procured Kirghiz hunters (such as they are) from him, we proceeded up the valley to a place called Kuktoorok, which our shikaries told us was a good camp ground to hunt from. At last I had reached the goal of my ambition. I was amongst *O. poli*, and the next day I might shoot one. This was not to be, however, for the next day was an impossible one—snow all night and a thick fog in the morning, which lasted up to mid-day, too late to hunt that morning. In the evening we took a turn up the hill, but I saw nothing except some females.

The next morning I was up and away before daybreak. It was a grand morning : about four inches of snow on the ground, still and cold. I very soon scrambled up the slope of the steppe which occurs all round the base of the mountains in this region, and had hardly got my eye over the top when I spotted a herd. It looked promising. I had got my

chance at last ! They were very busy digging up the snow to get at the grass underneath. Beneath us the steppe undulated, and I soon made out a line that should take me within shot ; so telling my Kirghiz to be still where he was, I wriggled off over the snow on elbows and toes, flat on my stomach. My elbows got sore and my hands very cold. Swell after swell I circumvented, hoping that each would be the last, but as soon as I peered over it I found that by a little more crawling I should get nearer my game. At last from where I lay I could see nothing but a dead flat between me and the herd about 200 yards off—no chance of a nearer approach ; and when they did move I naturally concluded that they would go for the mountain, and therefore away from me. I made up my mind to shoot. The atmosphere was very clear, and the sheep stood out wonderfully plain on the white snow. I brought up my rifle and pulled off on what I took to be the best head. The smoke hung for a moment, and I saw nothing. But when it cleared, there they all stood, after a short spurt. I gave one the other barrel. This time there was no mistake—I heard the bullet thud ; and as they made off for the mountain one remained. He did not fall, but moved on slowly. Presently he lay down and died. On my way to where he lay I crossed the line of the herd, and there plain on the snow was a blood trail. I had got in my first bullet after all. I sat down and watched the sheep as they ascended the slopes in the distance. They rounded a spur out of sight, the wounded one with

them, for had he fallen out I should have seen him, as until then they were in full view as they went away.

Now a Kirghiz is a lazy man, and will not go a yard on his legs if he can avoid doing so ; this, perhaps, is fortunate, or the poli would be scarcer than they are. So I told him to go to camp, get a couple of ponies, and take the meat in. I then slung my rifle and made up my mind for a stern chase. A long one it proved to be. The blood tracks were defined, but to my grief (when I had followed for about an hour) still with the tracks of the rest of the herd, which I had not seen again after their disappearance. At last, topping a ridge, I made them out, the hindermost (a good ram) dead lame, as I saw through my glass. I felt rather done, and the way was over rough, stony slopes of debris ; but soon after this I saw him leave the herd, and after turning round and gazing intently in my direction for some time he lay down. I felt quite happy now. On nearer approach I found that as he lay in the middle of a corrie I could not, go which way I would, get within reasonable shooting distance without showing myself. It was now about eleven o'clock. I had left at daybreak. I was consequently as empty as a drum. If I could but finish him and get back to camp, how happy I should be ! However, there was nothing for it but patience, to say nothing of endurance, so there we lay for more than an hour. I kept covering him with my glasses to see if he would put his head down and die, but no such luck. At last, to my dismay, he



NATIVE HOUSES--TURKKESTAN.





got up again and hobbled up the hill to the sky-line. There he stood for some time, then disappeared over the top. I followed as quickly as I could, but, alas ! the blood had ceased to flow, and when I topped the brow he had disappeared into a branch nullah, where the snow had gone, melted by the sun, and tracking on the stony ground was out of the question. I was beaten. There was nothing for it but to run a back trail to camp. I was quite done, now that I had no hope to buoy me up. I had a good many rough spurs to cross before I got on to the steppe, but at last I dropped down into a nullah that led on to it. I had nearly got to the mouth when there was a rattling of stones right above me. I looked up, and there, well within shot, stood seven grand rams staring right at me. Fortunately, my rifle was loaded. I had time to unsling it, and got in a shot as they stood. I bowled one over. Off they went best pace down the hill. I got in the other barrel, but missed, while number one rolled down the slope to my feet almost, and there lay. I felt a new man and game for anything ; a moment ago I had been a worm. Such is sport. He was a beauty. I covered him with stones and burtza scrub, and went back to camp, which I reached without difficulty. It was rather late to go back to seek dead, and, indeed, I had done quite enough for one day.

The next morning I went off early with a couple of ponies, and brought in my beast, which I found safe and sound where I had left him over-night. We hunted with varied success in the Taghdumbash, and

having got what we wanted in the way of heads, we decided to make tracks for Yarkand, from there to work eastward along the Tarim or Yarkand river, where I hoped to get a stag, *Cervus yarkandiensis*. It is usually called maral by Europeans, but the word simply means hind in Turki or Persian. The stag is called bhoghe.

We had a rough and cold time of it before we reached Yarkand, but as we only lost two ponies on the road, we were fairly lucky. After a brief sojourn in Yarkand, my friend, who had accompanied me, and I separated to beat different ground. I followed the river down to Aksu without seeing anything of special interest, though I succeeded in getting a good specimen of the gazelle of Turkestan. On leaving Aksu I proceeded eastwards down the Tarim river. I camped at a village on the bank about 15 miles from there. Here I engaged a hunter, who told me we should find a stag anywhere in the jungle which fringes the river. He brought with him a fine specimen of the Imperial Eagle, which is used in this country for hawking purposes. I had heard of the performance of these birds and was delighted to have an opportunity of seeing a flight. Gazelle, foxes, hares, and pheasants, all of which are found in this region, are pursued in this way.

The next day I left my caravan on the trail and went off with my hunter, who had his eagle on a crutch on the saddle. We were both mounted. We had not proceeded far through the open jungle before we sighted a small lot of gazelles. The moment my

hunter sighted them he took his eagle under his arm, dug his heels into his pony's ribs, and went for them as hard as he could go, I naturally following. The gazelles stood for a little time gazing at us in surprise, and then turned tail and made off. When this happened (I suppose we had got within 100 yards of them) my hunter cast off the eagle at them, and off went the bird flapping quite near the ground. We followed best pace. At first I thought the bird would never catch one, he seemed to go slowly. He did, though, and after a chase of a few hundred yards he caught one behind and pulled him down. My hunter, who was well up with the chase, was off his pony and on to the quarry in a trice, and finished him with his knife. He told me that he was only just in time, since the eagle, strong as he is, cannot hold the gazelle for long. I saw this proved shortly afterwards : we were not quite up to time, the beast had kicked off the eagle, and made off, leaving him screaming with rage on the ground. When this happens, the eagle never attempts to get up and resume the chase. Foxes and hares are also caught by the barcoot, as the eagle is called.

#### OVIS HODGSONI

\* Some years ago Hundes, a district of Chinese Tibet, was one of the best hunting grounds for these sheep. Being under the Lhasa rule, a good deal of diplomacy had to be employed to get permission from the Jompoon, as the commissioner of this province is

called, to hunt in his country. For some years, however, this beautiful hunting ground has been closed, owing to the crass stupidity of a young officer who went there to do some work for the Geological Survey.

On May 12 I left Mussoori, where I had laid in a supply of stores, and with my camp kit—consisting of an 8-foot square single fly-tent for self, smaller one for servants, camp bed, chair, and table—took the road from Mussoori on foot with about twelve coolies, and dropped down the long spur to Teree, where the chief of the native state of that name resides. I then proceeded up the pilgrim road which leads to Badrinath, up the Alaknanda river, the chief tributary of the Ganges. It is a beautiful valley, but until I made six or eight marches on my way I found it very hot. The road all the way was dotted with Hindoo pilgrims, and at intervals sheds and shelters were put up for them, where they herded together like sheep in a pen. Although I admired them much for the patient endurance with which they put up with the hardships of travel,—hardships which caused the death of a good many,—I was very glad when I passed Badrinath, where their shrine was situated, and had the rest of the road to myself.

Fourteen days took me to Gumsali, on the Tibetan frontier. Here I obtained yaks to carry my baggage, and a couple of hunters, Bootias, as they are called (although they have nothing to do with Bootan), and started off for the Niti Pass (about 18,000 feet above the sea). I got over this obstacle without

much trouble, and pitched camp, where I found, as I expected, the Jompoon of Dabu Hundes ready to meet me and tell me that I must immediately go back to my own country. This was the usual formula, and I made up my mind to a delay of a day or two until I could settle terms with him. After the usual palaver he said that, as I had come so far, and if I promised not to map his country, I might hunt for ten days. He then went home to Dabu, leaving a couple of Hunias to accompany me and see that I did not go out of bounds—that is to say, cross the Sutledge. Having settled so far, I started off for a range of hills on this side of the Sutledge, called Lal-pahar, or red hills, which Surju said was the best beat for big sheep in the district. Although there were lots of burhel about, I made up my mind to leave them alone until I had got what I had wanted of the nobler sheep, *Ovis Hodgsoni*.

Three days' marching found me camped at the foot of the range, and there I commenced business. On foot before daylight, with my single Henry .500 Express (the best stalking rifle in those days) in hand, or rather in Surju's hands, I made off for the hill. I may as well say what the ground frequented by the big sheep is like. On crossing the main Himalayan range you get on to a vast plateau 15,000 feet above the sea, and on this plateau there are various ranges or groups of low, undulating, bare hills, the sky-lines quite unbroken, nothing growing on them but tufts of grass (on which the sheep feed) and wormwood scrub, or rather weeds called burtza.

Down the corries of these hills dry water-courses run at intervals. In the extremely clear atmosphere of Tibet, and with that intense stillness unbroken by forest or running water, stalking is difficult indeed, especially in the early morning; but about ten o'clock the wind gets up, gradually increasing with the sun at mid-day until night, when it is blowing hard. However, the early morning is the best time to find game, as the beasts are then busy grazing. To see, and not to be seen, is the maxim for hunting and scouting. The big sheep can see, hear, and smell much better than a man.

On reaching the hills we carefully swept the exposed spaces with glasses, and as nothing was visible we climbed up a spur until we got on to the main ridge. We now had to proceed with much caution, for at any moment a sheep's head might peer over the sky-line. At last, after a great deal of spying in vain, I had just sat down and lighted a pipe when Surju, who was using the glasses close to me, gripped my arm and pointed. I made out what looked like a round object on the sky-line, about half a mile off. I focussed it with my glass—a ram's head, and a good one too! We sat still, and presently it disappeared behind the sky-line. Now for action. Away we went down the slope a little out of sight, and coasted round the intervening spurs as quickly as we could. At last, pretty well blown, we made the spur behind which our game had disappeared, and crawled cautiously up. We picked some tufts of wormwood as we went, and when we

got to the top, raised them gradually over it before we ventured to look over through this improvised covert. How often have I wished, when stalking, that my eyes were quite on the top of my head! When I looked over I was indeed glad; seven fine sheep, all old rams, were there moving about picking at tufts of grass. They did look big, as indeed they are—12 hands high. The drawback was that they were out of shot in a great open corrie, and quite in the middle of it too. If they would only come my way! But this was too much to expect; ten times out of a dozen they will not do it.

We lay and watched, and they gradually drew off to the opposite slope. Here the grass seemed to give out, so the leader started off towards the ridge much too slowly to please me. One after another followed, stopping every now and again, when one would turn on another and challenge him, then the two would stand straight up on their hind legs, then down with their heads, and bring their horns together with a bang that could be heard a mile off. At last they were out of sight, and away we went as hard as we could to try to catch them before they were out of shot from the ridge. Alas! when we looked over they were just as far off as before, which was natural, as the best of the grass was in the middle of the corrie. Patience again; but, oh horror! one after another they lay down. What was to be done? They probably would lie until mid-day, at which time, in the spring, when they have to make up flesh for winter starvation, the sheep generally eat rather

more food than at other seasons. So I set eyes and wits to work to make out a line of approach. At last it struck me. A water-course ran down the corrie, and on reaching the plain below turned a bit round the shoulder of the spur I lay on. If I could but crawl up this with cover all the way I had them within shot. I told Surju to sit tight and watch. Down I went behind the spur till I reached the plain. I peered round the shoulder ; there they were, just as I left them, reposing and chewing the cud. There was my water-course, and as far as I could make out, once in it I could creep quite out of sight to within 100 yards or so of the sheep. That was the difficulty ; from where I was to the nullah there was about 30 yards of flat ; the burtza or wormwood grew about a foot high, but was rather sparse. Could I crawl through this without being detected ? They were a long way off, but then they could see a long way. I made up my mind to try. Down I went flat, and wriggled into the open like a snake, keeping my eye on the herd all the time. I do not know how long I took to cover those 30 yards, but my knees and elbows were sore when I got into the welcome shelter of the water-course and rested. There they lay as quiet as ever. I started to work my way up the nullah. Now and again I got to a ticklish place, and I could only get over by crawling quite flat, but gradually and surely I drew up to them. My knees were bleeding, and so were my elbows, but what cared I ? One more 100 yards and I should be opposite to them. On I went ; the wind





*HEMITRAGUS JEMLAHIUS* ("THAR").



*OVIS HODGSONI* ("NIAN")—TIBET.



IBEX HORNS—TURKESGAN.

was right in my face, and all was well. At last I was there, and I lay like a stone, afraid to look over, for my heart was thumping so that I could hear it. In a few minutes I felt steady. Now for it! I pulled my cap off, and poked my head over. Yes! there they lay about 100 yards off. I must wait until they get on their legs. Then a horrid thought struck me. About noon the wind always shifted round, and it must be near 12 o'clock. There was nothing for it but to take them as they lay. For one sniff of the human being would get them on their legs and away without a pause, and the only chance I should have would be stern shot as they went away. I selected what I thought the best head, and pulled off. He never got on his legs; I had got him in the neck, and he just put his head down dead. The rest were on their legs like a flash, spurted 50 yards, then stood for a moment. I picked out another and dropped him to my delight. That was my last chance, and they were out of range in no time. I spent ten days on this range killing six more. I then struck camp and marched back to the Milam Pass, which Surju told me was a good beat for a big Burhel.

#### MARKHOR, IBEX, AND THAR

The markhor is the king of the wild goats, and owing to the difficulty of finding a really good specimen, his head is a trophy coveted more than most by every sportsman. The area inhabited by this animal, taken generally, extends round the hills

of the northern end of the valley of Kashmir—roughly from the Pir Punjal Pass up to Chitral, and up the Indus as far as Iscardo. In pursuit of this goat the sportsman must be prepared for a great deal of rough climbing, for the old bucks especially have a happy faculty of selecting the most precipitous ground, often with patches of thick forest, in which they lie all day, only emerging on the grass slopes early and late. However, if the sportsman can get a good Kashmir shikari, puts himself entirely in his hands, follows his advice, has a good head for climbing, and holds his rifle straight at the critical moment, he may still get what he wants in Kashmir.

A variety of this goat is to be obtained in what is known as the Trans-Indus region. His habitat is the arid ranges of the Suliman as far as Quetta, Beluchistan. The horns are not as fine as the Himalaya specimens, and are more spiral and stumpy. Very few of these are killed by fair stalking, especially of the old bucks, as they frequent very precipitous ground and hide in caves, only emerging late in the evening and at night to feed. They are mostly hunted with beaters driving to posted guns. The natives kill them sometimes by sitting up late and getting a shot in the dusk, when they leave their inaccessible lairs for grazing or water.

But to return to Kashmir. Now, alas! owing to indiscriminate shooting of small and great game, there are few markhor left. There are a few good old bucks to be found in the Kaj Nag (which runs along the right branch of the Jhelum), but only a

really good climber can get near them, and even so, the old markhor keeps in cover so much that, except in the rutting time, one has but a poor chance of getting sight of him. There is also on this precipitous ground a very good chance of the quarry, when shot, tumbling neck and crop a few thousand feet, to become, as may be imagined, nothing but a mangled mass of flesh and bones, the beautiful horns broken off short at the skull. The Gilgit district is now the only place where any sport with these splendid goats can be obtained, but owing to the impossibility of getting coolie transport and supplies (rice and flour to feed the men) in these parts it is a closed country for all except the few officers located in the district.

Some fifteen years ago I started from Kashmir with one of the best shikaris of that time, Kamala by name (poor fellow, I saw him die of cholera some ten years after). My intention was to go up towards Astor, follow the Rupel nullah up to the watershed, and drop down on the slopes of the Indus on the other side into Chilas, which is called in that part Yagistan, *i.e.* lawless, and is outside the British or Kashmir frontier—a forbidden country. This, of course, made it more interesting, and, not having been shot by the white man, I expected to find as many markhor as I wanted. To make a long story short—leaving most of my kit in the Rupel nullah, travelling light with a few coolies—I got over the pass without mishap, and found myself in Chilas.

I did not intend to meet any Chilasis, if I could

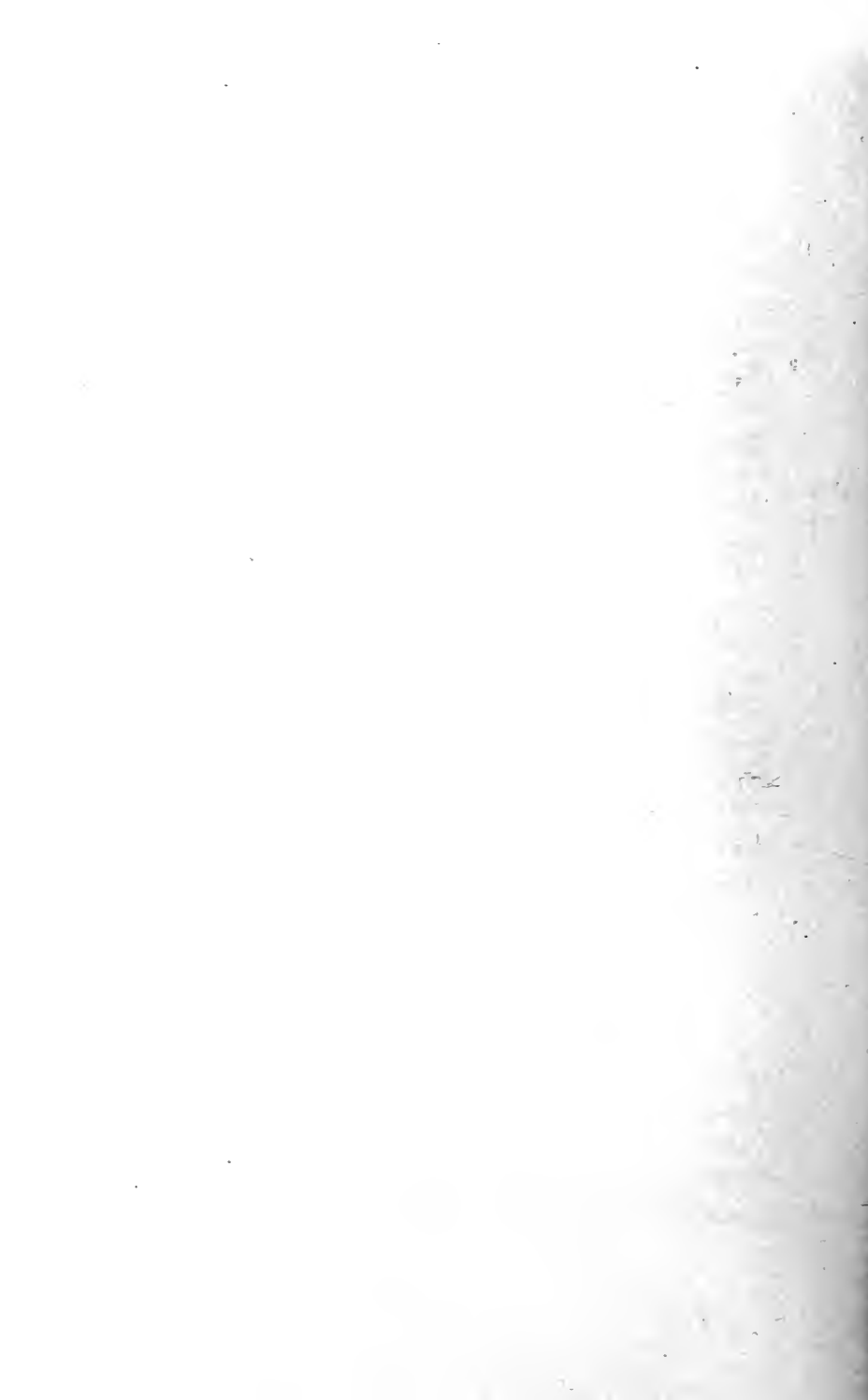
help it, but on my second march I was observed by some shepherds, rough-looking people, clad in skins, who scuttled off directly they saw me, and in a short time I saw a procession of about twenty approach with an old patriarchal Malik at their head. To my satisfaction we had quite a friendly interview. I gave him a snuffbox and a knife, and he presented me with a sheep. He told me there were lots of markhor about, that I must put up in his camp, which was not far off (a collection of little huts), and the next day he would give me a guide to show me where to find the goats.

We were off before dawn the next morning, and after proceeding across several spurs we spied a large corrie, where my shepherd guide made signs we should find game. We sat down and set to work with our glasses. For some time we could see nothing, but when I was beginning to think our first draw a blank, Kamala gave a whistle, and pointed across the corrie; sure enough, they were there, a good herd, with some nice white-looking ones among them. This meant old bucks. Now to get at them! They were a long way off, so we dropped down into the corrie without fear of detection, especially as they were feeding. It is when they are lying up that they are difficult to get at, for then they are sure to be on the look-out. Spur after spur we scrambled and crawled over, rough stony debris and loose shale here and there cutting our grass shoes to pieces. These shoes are sandals made of twisted rice-straw rope.

At last we were right in the middle of the great



*HIMALAYAN THAR.*





corrie. The herd had been feeding towards us all the time, and as we topped each ridge we expected to sight them. The one on which we now lay was very steep, and almost overhung the ground in front of us, although fairly easy on the side we had ascended. We could not see our herd anywhere; we were spying the ground over very carefully when all of a sudden at our feet there was a clatter of stones right below us, and the whole herd streamed out of some birch scrub where they had been concealed. "Shoot, Sahib; they are going off," said Kamala. I did not like the shot, for they were right below; however there was no help for it. As they stood for a moment and looked about them, I picked out what I took to be a good one and pulled off. Phist! went the bullet into the stones over his back. A clean miss. Being nearly straight below I had not aimed enough on the near side of him. I put in another cartridge and let drive again as they were ascending the opposite slope about 150 yards off. Hurrah! Over he went. When they reached the top of the ridge they paused, as I hoped they would, and I got in a long shot, and luckily grassed another of the herd. Two good heads they proved to be, so, after decapitating and cutting off as much meat as my coolies, who had now come up, could carry, we started home.

Very glad were we to get to our hut, our grass shoes cut to shreds, and even the leather moccasin worn underneath them quite gone in the soles. My feet were so sore that I was unable to go out next day, so devoted it to skinning and cleaning the heads.

At even time my friend, the Malik, turned up and said, "You had better go back to your own country, for the Malik of Booner" (the adjoining village to his) "has got news of you. He is much stronger than I, so I cannot protect you." It was a sore disappointment to me to leave my newly discovered shooting ground, but Kamala, with tears in his eyes, said, "Oh, Sahib, your kismet has been good; you have got two heads; if we stop we shall all have our throats cut. In fact, if you stop, the coolies will run away." So I yielded to *force majeure*, and retreated the next morning.

Ibex are easier to hunt than markhor, in that they always keep to the open above the forest-line, never seeking shelter in the forest as markhor do. And although they are to be found on fairly easy ground (for a good walker, that is to say), sometimes one has some very stiff climbing before getting a shot. In the spring especially, when they are low down near the main valleys, the ground is generally more precipitous; whilst when they retreat higher up in summer towards the snow-line, the ground opens out, and the slopes on which they feed are less abrupt.

About fourteen years ago I went up one of the best nullahs in the Kashmir Wardwan valley, called Creush Nai, in July, and after a month's work brought back twelve heads, all good enough to put on the wall. I should not (and would not, with my present ideas) have shot so many, but with a bit of bravado, when I left my regiment I said I would bring back a dozen heads to put up in the mess.

This working for a good bag is much to be deprecated, and now I believe game laws have been made in Kashmir, limiting each sportsman to so many head of the same sort.

The thar is a species of wild goat, and is to be found on the same sort of ground as the markhor. He is just as difficult to find and stalk as his habits are very similar. Early in the morning and late in the evening he emerges from some densely wooded shelf on the crags, and grazes on the steep grass slopes in the vicinity. It takes a very steady head to hunt the thar: one slip, and away would you go into eternity. You must be careful, withal, where you shoot your thar, for although, if he does roll a thousand feet or so down the cud, or hill slope, his horns, from their shape and size, are not so liable to smash as those of the markhor, still it may happen that when you get to your quarry he is smashed up into a pulp.

Some years ago I had been hunting for a markhor in the Pir Punjal range without success for some time. I had been out for a week without shooting my rifle at anything but a bear, which I had bagged. I had certainly come across one of those solitary beasts called serow, a sort of goat-antelope. But although he was proceeding in quite a leisurely fashion in front of me, ascending an opposite spur, he persistently got behind a tree whenever I covered him with my rifle, so that eventually he topped the spur without giving me a chance. Saddik, who was, and is, if still alive, the oldest and best shikari in the Pir Punjal, took me to a camp a few miles below on

the Poonch River valley, where he said I should find plenty of thar, and as I had never killed a specimen I was glad of the chance.

We took up a position on a ridge overlooking a lot of converging spurs with grass on one side and forest on the other, and waited for dawn. As soon as it got light enough we spotted four or five on a spur opposite, on a grass slope a good deal steeper than the roof of a house. The question was, how long would it take us to get at them, for they were on the opposite side of a huge chasm : I can call it nothing else. That was Saddik's business, so I said, "Chello" (Go on). Slithering down, climbing up steep slopes, digging holes to put our toes into (we had, of course, grass sandals with our toes protruding), with our mountain poles, and after an hour and a half of risking our precious necks I do not know how many times, we eventually got up to a spur which Saddik calculated would be the next to that on which we first saw the thar. There was no time to pause, for these beasts are restless in their habits. On we went until, to my joy, for I was dead-beat, Saddik unslung my rifle, handed it to me, and signed to me to go up the spur. I crawled up carefully and raised my head cautiously over the ridge.

Dear old man, how well he had calculated ! there they were across the nullah, feeding quietly, five of them ; great black monsters they looked, with hair reaching nearly to their toes, only about a hundred yards off. I lay for a moment to steady myself, for what with climbing hard and excitement

my heart was going like a pump. I poked my rifle carefully over and covered the nearest one. Bang went little Henry, and over and over rolled my thar, until out of sight below, where I heard him thump, thump, as his body bounded down the cud. I slipped in another cartridge and had just time for another shot as the remaining thar stood for a moment, after the first scatter caused by my shot, before they topped the opposite slope and disappeared. I looked at Saddik inquiringly. "All right, Sahib ; I think you hit that one too. I hope he will lie up the other side of the jungle and die without tumbling down like the first, who is, I fear, smashed all to pieces. We will give him time to die ; I don't think he will go far." So, nothing loth, I lay still and smoked a pipe. "Now chello, Saddik," said I, when I had finished my smoke ; and away we scrambled down one side and up the other of the rift between us and where I hoped to find my beast. Near the top we came on a blood track, and I felt easy in my mind. I only hoped that he was dead, and would not struggle up and follow the example of number one down the cud. "All right, Sahib," Saddik pointed. There he lay against some scrub birch, stone dead. I called up my coolies, who were behind, to skin, quarter, and take him home. Then we had indeed a scramble to get down to where number one lay, but at last we found him ; his body was smashed up terribly, and his skin cut to ribbons, but luckily the head was all right, and turned out to be a very good one.

BURHEL (*Ovis NAHURA*)

This sheep has a larger habitat than any other of the tribe. It is to be found in all the trans-Himalayan hill country as far as, and throughout, the Pamir steppes, to the Tian Shan, which bounds that region. He is a wary beast and affords good stalking, but his head as a trophy cannot be called handsome, as the outward, downward, and backward sweep of the horns do not make much of a show. Thirty inches in length from base to tip would be an exceptionally good head. They are, however, the best of the wild sheep in the way of mutton, which is a point in their favour when meat is scarce in camp. In the high plateau regions on the Tibet frontiers of India (*i.e.* Hundes) I hunted these sheep with much success; in fact in some parts they are so numerous that one gets sick of the sight of them; for individually after getting a few good pairs of horns I do not care to go on shooting the same beast. Some years ago, when in quest of the Hodgsoni (*Ovis ammon* of Tibet) I got what I wanted without much trouble. I worked up the Ganges river as far as the boundary range and on to the plateau.

A couple of days across the plateau took me to my ground near the Millam Pass in the Hundes district of Chinese Tibet, and I camped at the mouth of a nullah running down from the main snow-range. The burhel frequents more precipitous ground than *Ovis hodgsoni*; steep slopes of shale, which lie at

such an angle that each step displaces the stuff, so that half the labour when ascending is lost. There are great glacial moraines and slopes of rock debris, on which you have to pick your way carefully at the risk of broken knees and sprained ankles, whilst now and again a fragment of rock will come hustling down from the crags above, with no small danger to life and limb.

The morning after my arrival, whilst dressing before daybreak for an early start, Surju came into my tent and said that there was a herd of burhel on the move close to my camp, for, although too dark to see, he could hear the displacement of the stones as they moved along. I swallowed my tea and was soon ready for a start. At break of day we made them out : a good herd of rams moving up the side of the nullah above the camp. When they were out of sight beyond the first spur, I started after them. A stern chase it proved to be, and a long one, but after a couple of hours' hard work we came up to them, not within shot indeed, but in the middle of a corrie where they were grazing on the tufts of grass which grow sparsely between the stones. There was nothing for it but to wait until they moved, but the grass where they were was evidently good, and for over an hour we lay and watched. I made out some very good heads in the herd, and being in no hurry, determined to devote the whole day to them if necessary. At last they began to move up the opposite slope, and one after another gradually disappeared over the sky-line. It was a

good wide corrie, but at length we peered cautiously over the other side. To my joy I found them scattered, some lying, others pottering around within 100 to 200 yards from where I lay. I now had to pick out the best head, and as some were no doubt hidden amongst stones and rocks I bided my time.

At last what I took to be a good ram showed as he got up from behind a rock, and stood about 120 yards off. I put the bead carefully on to him and there was a thud ; over he went. At the sound of the rifle the lot were on foot. I put in another cartridge, and spotted a grand one, evidently the boss of the herd. I gave him one and away they went, but, to my disgust, he with the rest. I went up to look at the one I had knocked over, and Surju put him out of his pain. Then I thought I would have a look and see if by chance I had not made a clean miss at number two. I followed the tracks of the herd for a little way, and to my joy found a spot or two of blood. I left number one where he lay, and set off best pace after the retreating herd. After crossing a couple of spurs I saw them, rather strung out, ascending the opposite slope. I clapped the glass on them and examined them all to see if perchance number two had stopped behind. No, we could not make him out ; he had evidently laid up somewhere. We now proceeded very cautiously, I with my rifle all ready, for he might jump up at any moment. A drop of blood now and again gave us confidence as we went on tracking. Suddenly, with a clatter of





OVIS AMMON ("KOTCHIGAR")--ALTAI MOUNTAIN.



stones, he got up right in front of me about a hundred yards off, but my fortune was bad, and I missed him clean as he went away and disappeared over the next spur. "I am afraid he will now give us a long chase," said Surju, "for he seemed to go very strong, and wounded burhel can go a long way." However, we hardened our hearts and went on tracking, for we still had a drop or two of blood to guide us. Twelve o'clock, one, and two; still we went on, hungry and thirsty. At last, on looking over a rocky moraine below us, Surju pointed. He had made him out at last. There he lay behind a rock below. I went back a little way to get out of sight, then worked up to him from below. I crawled up to within fifty yards and put a bullet into him as he lay. We had him! He proved to have a fine head with fifteen rings on his horns. We were both dead-beat when we got back to camp in the evening, having been without food or drink all day, for I was so keen to start that morning that I had forgotten to put anything in my pocket. I stopped in this camp until I had got what I wanted, then crossed the Niti Pass back to Gumsali, which is a frontier village of Kumaon.

THE WILD SHEEP OF SIBERIA (*Ovis Ammon*)

*Kotchgar*, male; *Arkar*, female (Kalmuki)

This sheep, reckoned by naturalists the head of the tribe, inhabits the treeless mountain regions of Siberia and Mongolia, from the Altai Mountains to the Baikal.

In every respect its habits and general characteristics resemble those of the Poli of the Turkestan Pamirs and the Hodgsoni of Tibet. The male stands about 48 inches at the shoulder, but is more stoutly built and heavier than the Poli. Hair coarse, short, and light coloured in the summer, but in the autumn the coat becomes longer and darker in colour. The female resembles the Poli in every respect except that the horns are slightly longer. In the summer the adult males herd away from the females.

Curiously this sheep was very little known about fifteen years ago, and the splendid hunting grounds of the Altai were untravelled by the sportsman. Some years ago a great traveller of the name of Ney Elias told me that he had travelled from Pekin across the Gobi desert, and struck the Altai range at a place called Kochagatch, situated on the headwaters of the Katun river, one of the confluent of the Obi. He said that on the Mongol side of the range he saw herds of large dark-coloured sheep. As it was winter, the snow deep, and he wished to get on, he did not stop to hunt them. On this information I organised an expedition with a view of verifying his account. After some little trouble I got the necessary permit from the Russian Government, and in the month of June I arrived in Moscow bag and baggage. In those days the Siberian Railway was open for traffic only as far as Omsk, which place I reached in due course. There I purchased a tarantas to carry myself, my kit, and my servant (a Lette from Riga, who spoke German and Russian).

My objective was a place called Ongodai, situated in the Altai, about twenty-one days' posting from Omsk. From this place on to Kochagatch I had to pack on ponies, as the road for wheel traffic finishes at that place.

Having gone through the usual vicissitudes that such a journey on such roads, or rather trails I should call them, entails, I arrived at Ongodai without much trouble ; and taking it all round, except when hung up by thunderstorms, which are no joke in that part of the world, or small accidents in the way of a wheel coming off, or ponies *non est* at the posting-house when you arrive, I rather enjoyed the journey, doing an average of 100 versts per diem. As a rule I did not travel at night, but started at daylight, and put up at the first posting-house after dark. These posting-houses are generally clean and comfortable ; but it is well to be provided with the necessaries of life as they can generally only supply you with bread, milk, and eggs. I may as well mention that as a rule a camp bed is useful unless you want to be eaten alive. At a place called Bisk, seven days from Ongodai, which is only a village, I was able to outfit in the way of stores, as it is a place of considerable size. Soon after leaving Bisk the country changed in feature, and I found my road winding up the valleys of the Altai. It was indeed a pleasant change after the dead flats of the Siberian steppe,—green valleys, brawling streams, and hills covered with forests of pine and cedar.

I reached Ongodai in due course, and rested for

a couple of days to make arrangements for packs and riding ponies. I also engaged a Russian settler as general help and interpreter (he talked the Kalmuk tongue). On leaving Ongodai I marched about sixteen miles and camped on the banks of the Katun river, where a small tributary stream joined. Unlike the Katun, which is thick and turbid, coming from the glaciers, it ran clear and looked very like fishing, so I put my rod together and started off to see what it contained. I put on the Alexandra fly, which suits most fish, for I had not the remotest idea what I was going to catch. I had a fish the first cast, and I soon saw that he was a grayling, and a good one at that. I very soon killed as many as I wanted, for they were quite innocent and would take any fly you offered them. From this date, inclusive, I generally could get fish if I wanted them. All the Altai streams that were not glacial contained these fish, sometimes running up to 2 or 3 lbs. in weight. On the seventh day I reached Kochagatch, which is situated on a plateau or divide between Mongolia and Siberia. To the west were range upon range of fine wooded mountains, some of them snow-capped with glaciers, whilst to the east ranges of low undulating hills with broad open valleys appeared. This I was told was the country where I should find my game. I interviewed a Kalmuck chief whom I found camped at Kochagatch, a small frontier post on this road, which is one of the tea routes from China. He provided me with a couple of hunters, ponies, and drivers; and after a day's halt I started off for my

hunting ground. I did a march of about twenty miles the first day, and camped in one of the valleys I could see from Kochagatch. I strolled out in the evening, having settled my camp. Everything reminded me of Tibet; the country was similar—a crisp, clear atmosphere, undulating hills, flat valleys, with green grass flats in the bottoms. As I wandered along with my rifle in my hand in case anything turned up, I wondered whether I should find what I had come for all this weary way. I topped a little knoll, my heart jumped into my mouth. There it lay, relict of a bygone mighty ram. Shade of Jupiter Ammon, it was a head! I measured the horns. Roughly 56 if they were an inch, and 19 inches round the base. I was happy. To-morrow I may see one alive, and dead!

When I got back to camp I called my hunter and told him what I had seen. “Oh,” he said, “there are lots like that. We will shoot one to-morrow. Ten miles on we will camp, and we shall be in the best hunting ground.” At first streak of dawn on the morrow I was afoot, struck camp and started with Toba, my hunter. I followed up the valley for about four miles when it opened out into a big flat, with numerous valleys converging into it from all sides. Skulls, horns, and bones of deceased Ovis Ammon lay about. This was a favourite haunt of theirs in the winter, my hunter told me. “But now there is new grass on the hill slopes and we shall find them there.” We got to our camp ground without seeing game, so sat down and waited for the caravan

to come up. It arrived in due course, and, after pitching camp and settling things, I started up the hill in search of my game. After tramping up the slopes for about half an hour we found ourselves on a sort of step or plateau, which extended for some miles along the base of the main range, level with another step on the opposite or east side of the valley. We sat down on a stone and had a look round. Suddenly Toba gave a click with his tongue and pointed across at the opposite step. I got out my binoculars and made out what he saw—a herd of sheep, at least sixty or seventy. I got out the telescope to make them out more clearly; they were all females. Presently Toba pointed again higher up on the slope. I soon made them out—only five or six this time, but rams evidently from the size of their heads. I was for starting after them at once, but Toba said, “No good, they are much too far off on the opposite side of camp; we will go after them to-morrow; they won’t go far.” We then turned our attention to the nearer slopes on our side of the valley, but, after hunting about for some time we found nothing, and went home. The next morning, long before daybreak, we were afoot—Toba, another hunter, and myself. Taking a food supply for the day we started off on our ponies, across the valley and up one of the tributaries to the eastward stream. Toba’s idea was to go up the valley to the northward of where we had seen our rams the day before, and come down on them from above. For about two hours we proceeded up the valley, which



narrowed as we ascended, and the sides became more precipitous. Presently Toba, who was leading, on turning a corner, reined back suddenly and dropped from his pony. We followed suit. "What is it?" "Kotchgar," he said, and pointed to the left. We left our ponies, and I followed him. He led me on a bit and pointed, and I peeped cautiously round the corner. At first I saw nothing, but suddenly my attention was called by a displacement of shale, of which the slope was composed. There they were, five grand rams, about five or six hundred yards above, moving slowly along the slope up the valley. We waited and watched. The wind was right, blowing in our faces; but until they turned a corner we could not advance. How they potted along—it seemed ages to me as I watched. At last one by one they disappeared from view. The moment the last white rump was out of sight we were after them up the slope. I wished I had two sets of lungs. The shale gave with you as you climbed, and the angle was 45°. At last, sobbing and sweating, I got to the corner where they had disappeared. I put one eye cautiously round, with rifle at the ready. My heart was pumping so that I could not have held the rifle on them for a moment. There they were, but just as far off, if not farther, than ever. But now, instead of running a contour, they were going straight up, stopping every now and again to pick a tuft of grass which grew between the stones. The slope was harder, not composed of loose shale like the last. There was nothing for it but another

wait. I did not mind sitting for a bit, but having got my breath, I was keen to be off again. We must have sat for half an hour before the last disappeared over the sky-line. We gave them a minute or two law, to make sure that no inquisitive sheep would come and take a look back before going on ; then after them best pace, but poor at that, for although this slope gave better foothold than the last, it was mighty steep. After many a spurt and many a halt, at last we reached the crest. Toba's nose was over first, and he pointed eagerly ahead. I followed suit. There, on a flat sort of step on the side of the hill, which was covered with tufts of the grass they love, were the mighty rams taking their breakfast, pottering about in a leisurely way. They must have been 200 yards from where I lay, but in that clear atmosphere they looked little more than 100. Toba motioned me to shoot. Shoot, indeed, with my heart going like a pump ! I lay still to get my breath. I felt safe, well out of sight and the wind right in my face. Toba still continued to make hideous faces. Presently there was a stronger puff of wind than usual ; it seemed to curl over the scarp behind which I lay and caught me in the back. In an instant I realised what Toba meant—a back eddy of wind. At the same moment up went every head in the herd. I had not a moment to lose. I picked out my beast and let him have it ; but evidently not a moment too soon. They were off like a start for the Derby. But oh, joy ! leaving one of their number behind. Two bounds he had

made, and stopped, staggered, and subsided. The herd went on without a pause until they got to the sky-line, then stopped dead, as if by word of command, staring straight back at where I lay. It was a long shot, but I chanced it with the .303. I heard a smack, but saw no dust fly, and the sheep vanished out of sight. I looked at Toba, and he nodded. I took a look at number one as he lay, a beauty indeed, 56 by 19 if he is an inch, and went on after the rest. It was a long, weary chase. After a bit the wounded ram separated from the herd and lay down now and again. I went on tracking for a long time before I got a sight of him. He must have led us a good 4 miles over the hill-tops, until at last I made him out crossing the valley we had come up in the morning. We watched him slowly ascend the opposite slope, stopping now and again, until he got to a shelf, and there he lay down. We then decided to dispose of number one, so we ran a back trail to where he lay. We cut off the head, dragged him by the fore-legs to the edge of the slope, and sent him rolling down the hill, not stopping until he reached the bottom, close to where we had left our horses. We soon followed, and sent off to camp for a couple of pack ponies to take in meat and horns. Having refreshed the inner man with such food as we had brought out, we started off to hunt up number two. Toba had taken his bearings accurately enough, and we soon got on his trail. There was not much blood, except in places where he had lain down to rest. Poor beast, I felt sorry for

him. However, he had to be killed, and the sooner the better. At last we got to the shelf where he lay. We got over the edge and had a good look round. Good big *débris* of rock were scattered about, and if he was still there we could not see him. So we took up his tracks again and proceeded cautiously. Suddenly, up he jumped, a gun-shot from me, from behind a rock. He stood for a moment, gave me a good chance, and I gave him the *coup de grâce*. His head was not quite as big as number one, but still a very good one. We soon had his head off and trundled him down the hill. I then rode home quite happy, as may be imagined.





## CHAPTER XII

### DEER

By Major C. S. CUMBERLAND

#### AFTER THE BARASINGH OR HANGUL

THE red deer of Cashmere is to be found in the hills which bound the valley of Cashmere on three sides, and as far as Kishtowar, but not on the north side or Kasinag range. In the early spring, before April 1st, by which time most of the stags have shed their horns, the hills between the Wullar Lake and Grace is a favoured hunting ground, as they are then making their way out of the wooded ranges to the bare open mountains towards Astor, where they remain until the autumn, when the horns are matured.

And they then make their way back to the forest region.

These fine stags, like many other of the fauna of Cashmere, are not so plentiful as they were. For one sportsman (British) that used to hunt thirty years ago you may now number a dozen. Many of them have not an idea beyond killing something ; they do not hunt for specimens, but shoot for the bag. If a head is not worth taking they throw it away. Fortunately, now game laws and game licenses have been brought into force, limiting the number of heads to be killed by each sportsman.

Natives are prohibited from selling specimens, and in certain valleys which have been absolutely closed not a shot is allowed to be fired at big game. These laws if properly carried out will do some good in time. The hunting of stags in the winter, running them to a standstill in the snow, is also now prohibited. In days gone by many a good beast was so killed.

Early in March 1888, I pitched my camp in a small valley about fourteen miles from the Wullar Lake. The snow was still on the ground, soft and deep, which made mountain climbing very hard work ; the crust was rotten, and every now and again in the drifts I sunk up to the waist. For three days this hard work was not repaid by a single shot, but on the fourth I found the slot of a good stag which led me a long chase up one spur and down another. When we had followed about an hour a snow flurry came on pretty thick. My shikari slipped my rifle

into its cover and said, "Come along, Sahib; we will get behind that rock, where I know there is a bit of a cave, and stop until the snow has given over; it won't last long." Off he ran in front of me and disappeared behind a rock. But in a moment he was out again with a yell and nearly knocked me over, with a bear a foot or two behind him. I was unarmed, but so astonished that I stood stock still, and faced him, as did my under shikari, who was close to me. The bear, meeting two more men face to face, shied off and bundled down the hill, much to my satisfaction. We then took possession of his shelter behind the rock. The snow soon ceased, and we resumed the trail. At last we came on droppings still warm; the stag was evidently not far off, so we proceeded more cautiously. As we topped a ridge overlooking a nullah rather wider than some, my shikari whispered, "I think he is somewhere in this nullah," and peered cautiously over through the shrub on the crest. "Hist, Sahib, there he is." I caught sight of him at the same time about 150 yards off, broadside on, looking as big as a cow, a perfect mark on the white snow. I drew a bead on his shoulder and pulled the trigger. After two convulsive plunges he went down; my bloodthirsty shikari was off like a shot, knife in hand, to make him lawful meat, for the throat must be cut with an invocation to Allah before the blood has ceased to flow. He was a good stag, and though only a ten-pointer he had a pretty pair of antlers. We cut off the head, gralloched him, hitched a rope to his forelegs, and

dragged him down the nullah on the snow to our camp. The next day I chanced on a small herd of hinds, accompanied by one really good stag; they frequented a very abruptly sloping open corrie not far from my camp. For two whole days did I pursue this herd, but could never make my stalk good on account of the hinds; one or two of them would always get in the way just when I thought my chance had come at last.

My camp was not much off the Gilgit main track, and when I got back I found a friend of mine there on his way to these hunting grounds. He was so keen to get a barasingh that I told him he might go and have a try for this stag before he left. He was delighted, and was off the next morning with my shikari before daybreak. At about 8 A.M. I heard a shot, followed by two others. Just as I expected, he had evidently got a chance. In a couple of hours' time he turned up beaming with delight. He had got the stag, the big one, and had shot at another which had joined the herd, but missed him. He had got the biggest one, however, which was a royal, so he went on his way rejoicing.

In the autumn the stags work their way back to the wooded ranges of the Scind valley, and follow the divide between the Cashmere valley and the Wardivan to Kistiwar and the Pir Punjal range. They begin calling about October, early or late, according to climate. After a hot late summer they roar early; in a cold autumn they are later and do not call so frequently. At the best they are difficult



to locate accurately in this way, for they often move quickly between the roars, which resemble the bellow of a bull ascending to the falsetto.

It is usual at this time of year to pitch your camp near their run, which is known to the local shikari, and there you take up a position morning and evening, concealed in birch scrub and watching for the stag which may come, but it is very slow work, and the beasts are not numerous. If you hear one call, you naturally go for the sound as quickly as you can, but this, again, is uncertain work; and even if you strike a trail, the stag will probably go faster than you can, for the Cashmiri is not like a Red Indian, and cannot run a trail except on snow. However, it is just as well that they are difficult to overtake, for otherwise they would soon be exterminated. There is always the chance of coming across a leopard when hunting barasingh, and, of course, bears in plenty, but even they are thinned down a good deal.

I was hunting in a valley near Bundepore one spring, and from the top of a ridge which commanded some open grassy nullahs I made out with binoculars some object that I could not quite identify. My shikari was a little way back spying another nullah with my long-view telescope. When he joined me I pointed, and he laid on the telescope. He turned round beaming with satisfaction, "Two leopards eating a dead carcass," he said. Off we went best pace to circumvent them. We got as near as we could under cover, but they were in an open grassy

basin with no cover whatever. They were chewing away at a hind which they had killed. There was nothing for it but to wait until they moved, as they probably would soon, to get a drink after meat, as the sun was getting warm. After a little time they crawled off down the valley, and I moved parallel to them, hoping that they would take a slant my way. This they did in course of time, but when they did get within reach the ground was so strewn with rocks and stones that it was just a chance getting a clear shot. At last, as there was jungle ahead to which they were making, my shikari whistled. They stopped short. I threw up and fired. I heard my bullet go crack against a stone. They gave a spurt and stopped again. I was using a double rifle, fortunately, as I always do for jungle work. I got a clear shot, and hit one pat this time. It spat and hissed like an angry cat, but, after turning head over heels once or twice, lay still. When I got pretty close, my shikari dropped a stone or two on the leopard, but it did not move. This turned out to be a female; the other I saw twice afterwards evidently looking for his mate, but he never gave me a shot.

#### THE RED DEER OF THE ALTAI MOUNTAINS

In the forest region of the Altai range a fine specimen of the red deer is to be found. He is more of the Wapiti type than that of the European red deer. In colour the mature stag resembles the former, but

is generally lighter, running into grey-roan, with the yellow rump patch of the American specimen. The horns do not run large, but have the back-growing terminals of the Wapiti. They are nowhere in these hills to be found in any large numbers, as they have been systematically hunted down by natives and killed when the horns are in velvet, for when in this state they are used extensively by the Chinese for medicinal purposes, and command a good price in the market. I have heard that since I visited this country the Russians have realised that they are being gradually exterminated, and are now strictly preserving them. A few of the Kalmucks who live in the country take the young and park them, sawing off the horns when still soft.

After hunting the *Ovis ammon* on the eastern side of the Altai, on the Mongolian border, I proceeded west into the forest region of the main range. Crossing the head waters of the Katun about fifteen miles from Kochagatch, I marched up a tributary valley running west and east. The change after the arid Mongolian slopes was very refreshing. Instead of bare, stony slopes, my path led me through magnificent forests of pine and cedar, and after ascending rather abruptly for some miles, we found ourselves in a sort of plateau of undulating down and forest region resembling Scotch deer forest more than anything else—moorland covered with scrub, composed of a sort of hornbeam which, in its red autumnal colouring, resembled heather in the distance.

Now and again as we crossed these moors a covey of grouse<sup>1</sup> would get up. After a march of some fifteen miles or so we camped on the shores of a largish lake, around which, my hunter informed me, the boghe, or stag of the country, was to be found. I was afoot before daybreak the following morning, and started off with my hunters to beat round the edge of the lake. We soon struck the trail of a herd of deer, but after following for some time we concluded that there was no good stag in the herd, so left them and proceeded on our way. Soon after this a roedeer doe crossed our line. As I watched her go I saw that a buck was in pursuit, so put on the pace with a view of cutting him off if possible. He was, however, too quick for me, and I failed to get a chance at him. As I went I flushed a huge cock capercaillie, but as I had not a gun in my hand he got off. After hunting all about the shores to the lake for two days without success, for I saw no stag worth a shot, I decided to move on to another beat. I struck camp and proceeded west across the plateau. I was walking along over a tract of open moorland a short distance ahead of my ponies, with rifle in hand in case of a chance by the way, when suddenly I caught sight of a beast moving on ahead over a swell. As he topped the sky-line I got my glass on him, and made him out to be a roebuck, and a beauty too, with horns far longer than the Scotch specimens. I stopped my

<sup>1</sup> This grouse is found in Northern Siberia, and is similar to the willow grouse or "ryper" of Norway.

caravan and put on the pace when he was out of sight. When I crawled up the swell over which he had disappeared, I found him feeding about 100 yards below me. As he turned and gave me a broadside chance I got in a good shot and bowled him over. This was a chance indeed, and I was delighted to get the specimen. He carried quite the best pair of horns I had ever seen on a roebuck. I called up the ponies, we galloped him, packed him, and proceeded on our way.

Towards evening we got to our camp-ground on what my hunter said was a very good heat for a "boghe." Having pitched camp, etc., it was too late to hunt, so turned in in good time with the view of an early start the next morning. I was up long before the lark; in fact, it did not get light before we had proceeded a couple of miles, when we found ourselves on a rolling tract of down-land interspersed with forest patches. Here my hunter made signs to me to sit down and wait. We took up a commanding situation under cover, and set to work to spy the surrounding country. Presently my hunter touched me and pointed. About half-a-mile from where I sat I saw a hind emerge from a patch of forest, soon followed by another and another, until about a dozen were grazing in the open, but as yet no sign of a stag. My usual luck! This was 25th August. Surely the rutting season must be coming on. Where are the stags? I looked towards my hunter. "Boghé yok"—no stag! He pointed. Hurrah! there he was just emerging after his "hareem." Oh, such a

beauty, as he stood and looked round with his head in the air ! In colour he looked almost white, as the sun shone on his blue-roan coat. I now got the fidgets to be at him, and began to look around for the chance of a stalk. The herd were moving down into the grassy basin below us, feeding as they went. A tongue of cover ran down a nullah to a point, and towards this they seemed to be heading. I was just on the edge of another such strip of forest. I jumped up and made the best of my way back up the hill to where the fork, as it were, joined. There was no time to be lost. I soon reached the main forest and hurried down the strip, which I hoped would give me cover. If the herd continued moving in the same direction, and I could get there in time, my chance of a shot was good. The wind was all right, and I felt quite sanguine as to the result. In less time than I thought I got to the end of the strip. There they were pottering along in the same order, the stag last, unfortunately. They were still about 300 yards from where I lay concealed. How slowly they moved ! Nearer and nearer they came ; at 200 yards they turned off a bit, the stag still the farthest of all. Oh, my nerves ! When I want to shoot, can I do so ? I put my two thumbs together. Fairly steady. Presently a hind put up her head and stamped. Something had disturbed her. Not I ! The wind was still in my face. She trotted on a bit, and the rest looked up and followed. They then filed past me until they stood 100 yards from where I lay. The stag had made up to them and stood broadside on.

Now was my chance, and I gave it to him—a steady kneeling shot. I heard the bullet “phut” into him. Before I had time to give him the other barrel he gave two convulsive bounds, and then dropped to rise no more. How I gloated over my prize, the first stag shot in the Altai by a white man. I sent off for the ponies, and set to work to skin him and break him up, as he was too big to load in his entirety. For weight I should say that he was quite as big as a Wapiti, but the horns, although handsome, were nothing like as fine. The coat was very good, of a beautiful blue-roan colour with the yellow rump patch. I hunted for some days after this, but never got a chance at another stag. Neither did I hear any roaring. The last day, however, I hunted from this camp I came across an elk. The morning was thick and foggy, and I could not make out whether I hit him or not. As the fog drifted clear for a second I just made him out. I followed his slot for a little, but as there was no blood I concluded that I had missed, and soon gave it up. This interested me much, for I had never heard of elk in the Altai, although they frequent the plains of Siberia. My Kalmuck hunter called him “botan,” and said they were rare to meet in these hills.

I moved camp about ten miles on my road towards the Katun, which was my objective. Here I had another chance at a stag, but, alas! I missed him. I got on his trail early one morning, and as he was alone I determined to stick to him as long as I could.

After following for about two hours, for tracking here and there was difficult, the sun got hot, and I had to proceed cautiously, as he was now lying up for the day. The trail led along the side of a steepish range, and the spurs over which I passed were rather abrupt. As I got to the top of one such spur and looked cautiously over my heart pumped into my mouth; there he lay right in the open, not much more than 100 yards below. There was no getting any nearer, so I made up my mind to shoot. I put on the bead, alas! too full, and pulled off. He was on his legs in a moment, and plunged into the forest. I felt somehow that I had shot over his back, as one often does with a down-hill shot. However, I followed his trail for some way and looked out for blood traces, but all to no purpose, so I gave it up and went home sad. After this, as time was getting on, and Siberian bad weather (which is no joke) approaching, I marched back to Ongodia, the terminus of the posting road, where I had left my tarantas, as the postchaise of the country is called, and so on back to Kainsh, ten days' posting, where I struck the railway to Moscow.

#### YARKAND DEER, MARAL

The red deer of Turkestan is to be found in the forest region bordering the Tarim river. About the same size as the Scotch red deer, they carry very even, well-shaped heads, with terminals, generally two



in number, at right angles to the axis of the head, looking directly front.

I got a very nice stag of these deer in course of the expedition previously referred to after the *Ovis poli*. These are difficult to find, living as they do in the swamps and grass jungle on the river banks. Fortunately, here and there little knolls are scattered about in those jungles, from which you may overlook a fair lot of ground, with glasses, in the early morning, when beasts are on the move. In this way I made out one day a nice-looking stag with two or three hinds, and having taken my bearings as to his position, descended from my perch. It was rather chancy work, for the jungle was pretty thick, and I could not expect to get a sight of him until quite close. By good luck, however, I crawled straight up to where the deer were, and got a stern shot at the stag as he went off at about 50 yards distance. I caught him fair under the tail with my .500 Express, and it is needless to say he did not go far.

From the number of deer-paths to be seen on these river flats you would imagine that they were plentiful; it was several days, however, and I had travelled a good many miles down the Tarim river, before I got a chance at another. I came across the pugs of a tiger occasionally in the snow, which lay about two or three inches deep, but although I worked pretty hard to catch one up I never succeeded. I was very keen to get one of these winter tigers, as they have beautiful fur at that time of the year, but

I found it impossible to localise one. They never, as far as I could hear, killed cattle or ponies, but a sheep was their special fancy. Having eaten one or two in one place they promptly shifted their ground, and never laid up after a feed. I could only hear of one man ever having been attacked by one, and that was a very old story.

### CHEETAL, SPOTTED DEER

This deer is to be found in all the jungly parts of India, except in the desert or dry districts of the Punjab and Scind. It is essentially a forest dweller and runs in herds, bucks and does together. In the early morning they may generally be found grazing in glades and on the outskirts of the forest. They carry very pretty heads of six points, brow antlers and two terminals, like the sambur. The cheetal and tiger may be said to run together—that is to say, where there are cheetal there are always tigers. In beating the Terai jungles at the foot of the Himalayas, having finished the tiger beat, the order for promiscuous shooting is given, then many of these beautiful beasts are brought to bag, for they generally allow the line of elephants close up to them in the forest before they break away. Hog deer which frequent the swampy portions of tiger beats are also shot in large numbers in the same way. Their horns, like those of the cheetal, only carry the brow antlers and two terminals, but they never run to any size and are poor trophies. They are mostly shot

to supply the camp followers and elephant men with meat. They afford very pretty practice, however, for howdah shooting (off an elephant), for, when you spring them they go with a headlong rush right away, and seldom give you more than a quick snapshot; I may here mention that for shooting from the back of an elephant a rifle cannot be too bent in the stock; in nearly every case where a shot is missed it is from too much elevation.

The cheetal sheds his horns in an erratic way, and it is as well before making an expedition in his pursuit to find out if he is fit to shoot. I was shooting once in the "Barber," a portion of the Terai between Nepal and Dehra, in the early part of February one year, and to my disgust found that the cheetal were all in velvet. However, fortunately I met a forest officer shortly after, and he told me that if I proceeded into the foot hills for about 20 miles from where I had been hunting (into the Kotri Doon, as it was called) I should find the deers' heads perfectly clean; I took his advice and found that it was so.

Towards the end of a sojourn in the Mundla district, I found myself camped on the banks of the Narbuddah. My camp ground was perfect but for one drawback—the mango grove in which it was situated was colonised by a quantity of flying foxes, a large frugivorous bat, and the amount of swearing and quarrelling that went on all day was trying to the nerves. However, as it was rather too large an order to shoot them all, I let them alone. South of

my camp there was a tableland, pretty open, with short grass on which the cheetal fed morning and evening. In the heat of the day they retreated to the slopes on this table, which were covered with thick jungle. Up betimes, as usual, with .500 in my hand, I walked off to my hunting ground. We were now getting into March, which in this part of the world means a very hot sun. The deer, therefore, do not stop long in the open, and you must be up very early to catch them out. I was somehow unlucky, for although I saw a few stags, they were restless, and I could not get a decent shot. The reason for this I found out later on. We had got to the end of the tableland farthest from the camp, and I remarked to Puddoo that my chance was over for the morning. "Oh, no," he said; "I and Yelloo" (a man I had brought out from the village) "will walk along the jungle slope" (which led down to the river), "and if you walk along the top a little ahead we are sure to send a stag up to you, for they generally go up-hill." This soon happened, and I obtained a nice shot at a stag as he came up over the edge on to the flat. I knocked him over just on the edge, where he lay kicking, but in his struggles he went over the side out of my sight through the cane jungle; so I shouted to Puddoo, "Stag down in front of you, wounded; look out and I will go on in case you don't catch him, so give me time." I went on a bit. The canes were a little thinner here, so I watched; presently I heard something coming. My cheetal? No, the unmistakable

"Sumf, sumf" (it is really hard to spell), the dead sort of sound of the pugs of a tiger as he goes. Presently through the canes I saw the stripes. Oh! how I should like to have shot. He was only 50 yards off, but with canes between us it was not good enough. I ran on ahead on the top, hoping to get a clearer opening. I found it a short way on, and waited, and listened, and watched. Would he come? If so I had a clear shot at 50 yards or so, which ought to be good enough. Oh, no, the malign influence supervened! He splashed through the river below and went up the other bank. Puddoo found my cheetal, a good stag, but I cared for nothing but a tiger then, and a tiger I could not get.

The next day I kicked up a tigress with two cubs, but she only offered me a vanishing stern shot, which is much too uncertain unless you have an elephant to follow upon, and to wound a tiger and let it go is wicked, for the next native that stumbles across it is surely killed. I obtained three very good cheetal, all pretty much on the same ground, as the axis deer is very local; but he is not interesting to hunt; you chance on to him and get a shot, or you jump him in the jungle or high grass, and he goes off for all he is worth. Well, I had gained what I had wanted, and so determined to return to Mundla after one more try for a tiger, as I saw pugs every day. I had seen nothing in the morning hunt except a few cheetal, which I did not want, and was returning from my evening beat when an event happened which I have never ceased to regret. I was returning

home to camp on the flat tableland aforementioned, and had made up my mind, being about half a mile from camp, that there was nothing more to be done, and so would smoke a pipe. I broke my rule, which is to carry my own weapon right into camp, and, taking out the cartridges, handed it to Puddoo. I was lighting up my pipe, and he was in front. Suddenly he sprang round and shoved my rifle into my hand. "Bagh, Sahib!" which means "Tiger, sir," Sure enough there he stood, right in the open within easy shot, broadside on. The very shot I had been hoping for, and my rifle was empty. Just a grunt and he was gone. My feelings may be imagined.







INDIAN BUFFALO.





## CHAPTER XIII

### BUFFALO AND BISON

By Major C. S. CUMBERLAND

#### BUFFALO

THIS most sporting of all the Bovidæ is found only in Bengal and Assam. A few are found on the Upper Chindwin river of Burmah, but they are sprung from the domesticated, or rather semi-domesticated, herds kept by natives ; only taken up for ploughing when wanted, and sometimes not taken up at all, and so reverting. There is absolutely no difference between the wild and tame beast

except condition. As to length of horns, some of those both of cows and bulls in the Burman semi-wild herds are simply magnificent, and my fingers have itched to pull the trigger when I came across them, to all intents as wild as wild can be when roaming the jungle, and as fierce (to a white man) as they make them. However, it is as well not to kill one in Burmah, for if you do plenty of claimants will turn up, and you will have to pay through the nose for your fun.

Sometimes a wild buffalo bull attaches himself to a tame herd and gives the herdsman a good deal of trouble. I was travelling down the Brahmapootra in boats with a friend who had spent most of his time on the frontiers of Assam, and who had killed more buffaloes on foot than anyone else. At a village where we stopped, the headman reported a bull buffalo with a tame herd, so we camped with a view of meeting him in fair combat. We did so the next morning, and a pretty dance he led us. We found him on the edge of the open sand chur with the tame cows in the early morning, and as we were bothered by the cows getting in the way we did not succeed in stopping him. We both fired, however, and he plunged into the thick forest, leaving a blood trail behind him. We tracked him some way, but found the jungle so dense that it was useless to expect a fair shot if we jumped him, or if he charged, which he was most likely to do when he lay up.

We therefore sent to the village for some dogs, to see if we could worry our buff. into more open

jungle. These dogs, which are found in the Mirri villages, are something akin to the Chinese so-called Chau dog—small, red, pointed nose, prick ears; they give tongue when holding up or hunting on the trail of a beast. Five or six of these little beasts soon turned up, and after a bit we heard them giving tongue freely. We posted ourselves, selecting positions down wind, and sent some villagers round to start the bull in our direction if possible. We soon heard the bull crash by between us, but the jungle was so thick that neither of us got a chance. The next time that we heard the dogs holding up our beast we tried crawling up, but even then, when we got within a few yards of him, we could not get a chance of using our rifles, and had ourselves a very good chance of getting a job from our enemy if he ran into us. At last we got him out of the tree jungle into some high grass, where there was a chance of getting to terms with him, as it was not of any great extent, and parts of it had been burnt in patches, for before we took up our positions we sent the Mirris round to set alight to the grass behind him. He must have waited until the fire and smoke nearly choked him, and then out he came with a grand rush. We both fired, but it was anything but a clear shot as he charged between us. There was more blood, however, on the trail this time, but a wounded beast takes a deal of killing, and once more he got into thick forest. The dogs were now quite done, and so were we for the matter of that, for it was eight p.m., and we had been afoot

since early morning. Much as we disliked leaving a wounded beast to die, we decided to go home and resume the hunt next day.

We were on the trail soon after daybreak with our trackers. We had not gone far when we saw a lot of vultures on a sal-tree. Welcome sight! we knew well what that meant, and very soon found our fighting bull dead and cold. At first, of course, I was pleased, but afterwards came a revulsion of feeling, and I felt quite sorry that he was dead, as he had fought so gamely all through the day before. However he had to be killed, as he was a nuisance and danger to the villagers. His horns were thick and stumpy, but as sharp as a spear, and a job from one of them would go into a man like a knife. A buffalo when charging prods at his enemy with one horn sideways.

BISON (INDIA), MITHAN (ASSAM), PYOUNG  
(BURMAH)

At any time the bison is difficult of approach. He loves the forest, and only emerges into open glades when tempted by the new grass that sprouts after burning, and even then the sportsman must be early afoot, for soon after daybreak he seeks the shade of the thickest brakes to lie up for the day. A solitary bull may, in this case, be followed sometimes with success, if the sportsman is very wary and silent in his approach, but in the case of a herd it is but lost labour.



*BOS SONDAICUS* ("TSINE")—BURMAH.



*BOS GAURUS* BISON—INDIA.



*BULL BUFFALO—WEST ASSAM.*

The mithan of Assam is identical in every way with the gaur bison of India, although for a long time he has been classified as a variety (*Bos frontalis*) having a flat forehead and straight out-growing horns. This type, however, is only obtained amongst the tame or semi-wild beasts in Lushai and Naga Hills.

The Indian bison is to be found in the Central Provinces of India, and in Lower Bengal as far as Raipur and Sambulpoor, also in Madras in the western portion, Canara Jungles, the Nilgiri Hills, and Travancore, Mysore, and the Wynad. Some years ago I paid a visit to the Mundla district of the Central Provinces with a view of hunting the gaur and swamp deer, or "gond," of which latter there are a great number, as well as sambhur and cheetal. In fact, this region, if permission be obtained to hunt in the fire-protected forests, is a perfect paradise for a sportsman. I arrived at Jubalpoore in December, and having made arrangements with the Forest Officer for permission to hunt, I outfitted with the necessary stores for a month's trip. These I loaded on camels and despatched to Mandla, a small civil station in the heart of the forest. Between Jubalpoore and Mandla there is a good driving road, but after that nothing but pack animals can travel. I may as well here mention that a camel load of soda-water should always be taken by the sportsman in this district, as the water is highly malarious. Plenty of quinine for self and servants is also a necessity.

Having given my outfit a couple of days' start, I followed on a horse gharri, as the postchaise of

India is called, and on reaching the dak bungalow at Mundla I found all there, so started off the next day for my first camp, about twenty miles from Mandla. Although there were plenty of sambur and swamp-deer, I found no sign of bison. I remained a few days, having good sport, getting some very good specimens of the former, and then moved on to where my "baiga" hunter told me I was sure to find gaur. I pitched camp in a pretty basin surrounded with flat-topped hills, covered with dense jungle on the slopes, but with open grass-covered tops interspersed with clumps of bushes—ideal stalking ground, if I could only find my bison there. I was up early the first day, and struck a game path through the jungle leading up to one of these tablelands. I found fresh droppings and tracks of a herd as I went, so I was in great hopes that I had now got what I wanted. I had not proceeded far after reaching the level when I heard a low sound. My shikari touched me, "Gaur hi, Sahib" (there they are), he said. I proceeded silently in the direction of the sound, crouching low amongst the bushes. The wind was right in my teeth; nothing could be better. The jungle got sparser as I went. Presently I smelt a smell exactly like the smell of a cow-stable at home, and shortly, on opening a small glade, there was the herd, ten or a dozen, moving quietly across just like a herd of tame cattle. They moved across the glade out of sight into the bush beyond, and I then followed as quickly as I could. Presently, as if by magic, up popped a head and pair of horns about 30



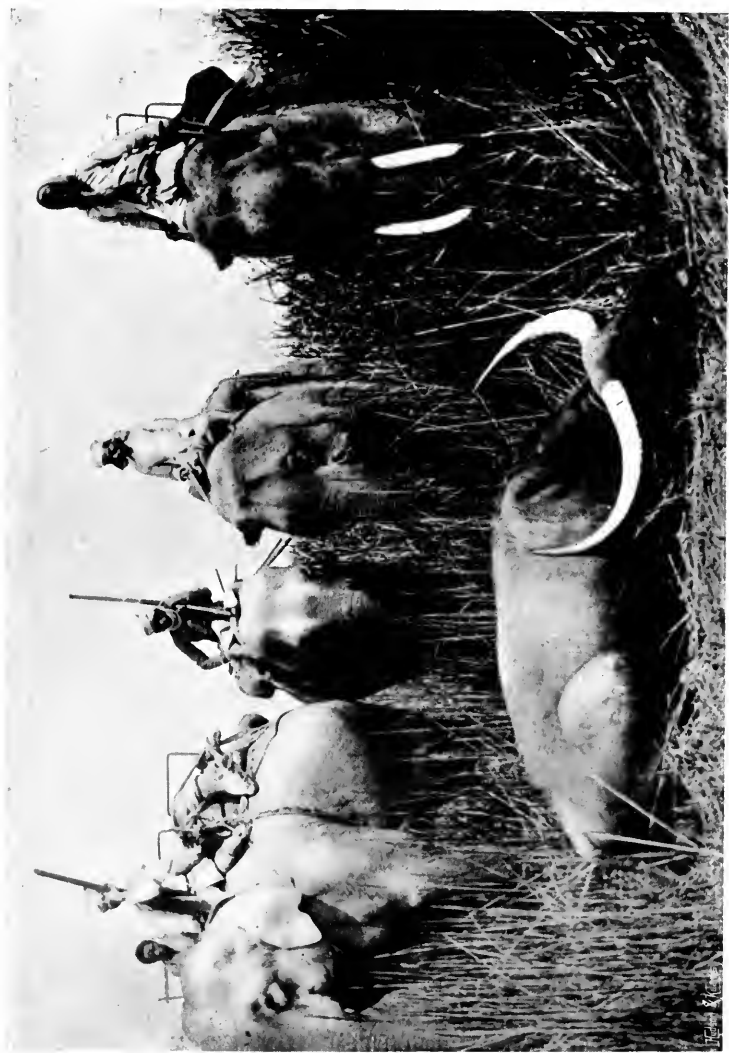
yards off, looking straight in my direction. It was all done in a moment ; bang went my rifle and I saw for a second four hoofs kicking in the air. There was a tremendous stampede all around me, and I took a quick shot at a vanishing black mass which I saw for a moment. I felt pretty sure the last shot was a miss, but the first I made sure of, as I had seen the bull's heels in the air. But alas, life is made up of disappointments. I ran up to where my beast had fallen ; he was not there ; there was blood and marks of his struggle on the ground, but that was all. His track led right away after the rest of the herd. I followed for about two hours until the jungle became so thick that all chance of a shot even at short range seemed hopeless. The wounded bull was still with the herd, but the blood showed less and less until it ceased, and we gave it up. I had hit the bull in the forehead, at an angle of forty-five ; he would have a headache for some days and nothing more. I went home sadder and wiser. Never shoot at the head of a bull when he is looking at you : in the neck and chest certainly if you can see it.

Puddoo, my hunter, recommended my shifting camp again the next day, and said he would take me to a place much frequented by solitary bulls, and I would have a much better chance of bringing one to book.

I struck my tents the next morning, and the day after arrived at my new camp. I found a camp of " Ghonds," inhabitants of this district, who told me that they had seen bison in the neighbourhood quite

lately. This was good hearing, so I promptly engaged one as a guide, and told him if he only showed me a beast, he should have the whole of the meat, and he agreed that this would suit him admirably. Sure enough the next morning within a mile of my camp we came across a herd, but alas, the cows, of which there were a good many, spoilt my chance by straggling about and getting in the way as they usually do, and they stampeded off without my getting a chance at the bull which accompanied them. I went home in despair. The next morning, rather down in my luck, I started off in the opposite direction to the one pursued the day before. The Jungle of Sol, interspersed with cane breaks and clumps of bamboo, was pretty thick in places, and my guide told me that this was just the place for a solitary bull, and showed me his trail more than once as we proceeded, which proved that the beast had frequented the place for some time. I was pottering along, wondering if ever I should get a shot at what I wanted, when suddenly, within 25 yards of me I saw something which sent a thrill down my back.

What was that imperfectly seen through the cane clumps? Surely it was the rump of a bison. As I looked the tail gave a flick. At last! I had my chance. I stood like a statue. I could not see the forepart of him as it was covered by a dense clump of bamboo: I feared to move, for if started, the bull, as I conjectured he was by his size, would be out of sight in a moment. I could just make him out as far as the last rib. Like a flash I remembered the



DEAD BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS.



TROPHIES FROM THE NILGIRI HILL, SOUTH INDIA.

advice of an old hunter. "Hit a bull just behind the last rib and pretty high up near the spine and he is yours." At this short range surely I could do this. Slowly I put the bead on and pressed the trigger. When the smoke cleared away the bull was not there. I listened intently. Surely if he had gone on I should hear him crashing through the jungle. Cautiously I crept round the bamboo clump. Oh, joy of joys! there he lay—a huge black mass! He had made one convulsive bound on taking the bullet, and lay there as he fell. Puddoo, however, touched my shoulder and pointed. There was no doubt about it, he moved; 'twas only an ear, but 'twas enough. I had better make sure, so I put another bullet into the back of his neck and that was the end of him. A splendid old solitary bull, 18 hands at the shoulder, and in splendid condition.

#### SWAMP DEER—BARASINGH, GOND<sup>1</sup>

This fine specimen of the deer tribe is to be found in the whole of the sub-Himalayan regions of India, from the Ganges valley to the extreme east of Assam, where the Brahmapootra emerges from the Mismi hills. It is also found in the sal forests of the Central Provinces. In the Mandla district especially it is numerous, and it is here that the finest heads have been obtained. In the sub-Himalayan regions the habitat of this deer is chiefly in the marshes,

<sup>1</sup> [This deer is included here as forming part of the bag in the Mundla bison-hunting campaign.—Ed.]

whence the name Swamp deer, but not so in the Central Provinces. In this region they are to be found in the open glades morning and evening, retiring as soon as the sun gets up into the forest during the heat of the day.

Some years ago I found myself in one of the protected forests of Mandla, having a pass from the forest officer. I was camped at a place called Kanakhesli. I had done a longish day's march from Mandla, and had just time to pitch my camp before darkness set in. It was the month of January, the climate was perfect, a slight frost at night and warm sun by day. As I sat in my tent and smoked a pipe after a good dinner not a sound broke the silence of the forest. Suddenly I heard a call I had never heard before ; it was more like the latter part of a donkey's bray than anything else. I called to my hunter, "Puddoo, what is that?" "Barasingh, Sahib," ("Swamp deer, sir"), he said. Then the chorus began : the bark of the kakur (barking deer), the belling of the cheetal (spotted deer), the trumpet note of the sambur, as he passed by and winded his enemy, man. Then I heard another sound I had never heard before ; it was more like the striking of an axe into a felled tree than anything else, and was repeated at intervals. "What is that, Puddoo?" "A tiger, Sahib, on the prowl." I lay awake a long time that night, listening to this to me delightful music of nature, hugging myself with the idea of meeting all these beasts the next day. Just as I was dropping off, however, I heard the most appalling row. 'Twas

as if the fiends of hell had broken loose. Only bears fighting or making love! "I'll look out for you to-morrow, my friends"; and I dropped off to sleep.

Before dawn I was out of bed, and having furnished the inner man with tea and scones, I sallied forth rifle in hand, with Puddoo carrying another, wondering which of the beasts I had heard singing the night before I should chance on first. The barasingh stag for choice, or a good sambur, but of course if by chance I came across a tiger! But this was too much to expect; it is not often he gives you a chance, unless you beat him up, or sit over a kill in the dusk of the evening.

The first beast I came across was a barking deer, within a couple of hundred yards from camp, but I let him be, and he rustled off through the grass. Then a sounder of pig came into view. Puddoo's mouth watered, no doubt, and he looked at me appealingly, but I let them be. I had gone about a mile from camp, through forest and glade, every now and again catching a glimpse of some beast as I went, but nothing worthy of a shot. Suddenly Puddoo pointed to a slot quite fresh, "Barasingh, Sahib, and a big one!" There was evidently a fair number of hinds with him, and I followed the herd cautiously. As we went the forest thinned, and we came to an opening covered with pretty high grass. Puddoo touched me, "They are probably here, Sahib." The glade was only a few acres in extent, but the grass was high, and here and there clumps of "bher

bushes" were scattered about. I stood behind a tree trunk, and watched. After a bit I made out movements here and there in the grass; the deer, no doubt, but I could not see them, the grass was too high. Another touch from Puddoo; I looked where he pointed, my heart gave a bound. About 100 yards from me, looking like two bare branches, I saw what certainly must be a magnificent pair of antlers. Every other part of the beast was hidden in the grass. I watched for some time, wondering what I had better do. If the herd came to me, good and well, but if they went the other way into the forest I was done. Fortunately the stag was nearer to me than the hinds, and the wind was in my favour. I would chance crouching up to him in the high grass. I told Puddoo to stop where he was. Bending low, off I went. Every now and again I looked over the grass with one eye as it were. Nearer and nearer I got. As I did so those antlers got bigger and bigger. Oh, Goddess Diana, give me this stag, and I will be your slave! Eighty yards, sixty, fifty—I heard the hinds rustling about near me, although I could not see them. I made up my mind to chance a shot. I stopped for a moment to steady my hand. I knew if I stood up and showed myself now the stag would throw up his head and stare for a moment before he made off. I asked myself, "Are you steady?" I felt the hammers of my rifle. All right! I stood straight up, with rifle to the shoulder. There was a snort of alarm, and within fifty yards, staring straight at me in astonishment, was a head and horns. It



flashed on me in a moment: Aim low under the chin. I did so, and pulled off. There was a stampede, and the herd made off, uttering their notes of alarm as they went. The smoke cleared in front of me. Where was my stag? I pushed on to where I saw him last. There he lay, stone dead, with a bullet-hole in the middle of the neck. Death must have been instantaneous. Puddoo came rushing up, and danced a war dance round him. He certainly was a beauty, and held the record for some time in Ward's *Book of Death*, but since then one has been shot half an inch longer in length of beam from burr to tip. I cut off the head, and covering the carcass with branches to keep off the vultures, I went home to breakfast quite a happy man. I shot as many more of these stags as I wanted before I left the district, one or two of them with very handsome heads. I have also met with these stags in the sub-Himalayan regions, but nowhere have I seen anything like the heads shot in the Central Provinces.

When hunting buffalo in Assam I have come across a good many, but I never saw one that I thought worth killing, taking the standard from what I had seen in Mundla.

#### MITHAN OR GAUR OF ASSAM

In the month of February, not long ago, I lay in camp on the Dehong, a tributary stream of the Bramapootra river. My tents were pitched on a sand flat, and jungle surrounded me. The country

was full of game—tiger pugs, buffalo, mithan, elephant, and sambur tracks showed fresh on the sand as I proceeded up the river in the early morning, and round every corner there was the chance of seeing something to shoot at. All the same, in spite of what the ground showed, it was seldom you did see what you wanted. The only chance to get a sight of buffalo or bison was to visit certain “chupras,” as they are called—open glades, sometimes some two or three miles in extent, where the grass had been burnt by the “Mirri,” as the natives of those parts are called. There, if you had the luck to sight a solitary bull buff<sup>1</sup> or mithan, you might, with luck, stalk him and get a shot. Having got your shot and hit your bull (it is not often that you kill him with one bullet), off he goes straight for the nearest cover, where he lies up if in anyway hurt. Then the bull-fight takes place. Your Mirri tracker takes up the trail, where you have lost sight of your beast. You should for this game be shod with indiarubber; your clothes must be of dark, dirty green, with not a speck of white showing. With an interval of ten or fifteen yards, you follow your tracker. The bull generally takes one of the game paths which meander about the forest; noiselessly you follow your tracker, with rifle at the ready. Suddenly there is a snort and a crash from one side or the other. The old bull has left the path, run a few yards back on you, and laid

<sup>1</sup> Herds of either species are hardly worth the trouble of pursuit, as the cows are always on the alert and in the way, especially in the case of buffs. They jumble up together, and it is hard to pick out the bull as they go.

up. Your Mirri tracker takes the charge and is dodging amongst the tree trunks (on no account may he run back on you, for an end-on shot at a charging bull, even at short range, is quite the worst). As the bull crosses, you put a bullet into his shoulder and haply drop him. This description of hunting applies equally to bison (mithan) or buffalo, with the difference, that as a rule a bison only charges when he is too sick to run away, whereas a buffalo will *sometimes charge when he or she is not hit at all*. I was riding along the edge of a chupra (glade) on an elephant, the grass was unburnt and pretty high; suddenly, to my left, up jumped a fine bull mithan. He stood for a moment about eighty yards off, and I gave him one in the shoulder with my 12-bore rifle. He swung round at getting the shot, and I gave him another as he went; he made off into the forest; I saw he was pretty sick and would not go far. I got off the elephant and laid the tracker on where he had disappeared. We had not gone more than a couple of hundred yards when my tracker (ten yards ahead), bending low, half turned and beckoned to me. I joined him, and he pointed ahead. The jungle was thick and the dense shade of the forest, after the bright light outside, made anything like sight at a distance very bad. I peered ahead for a moment, and just made out a black mass lying down about fifty yards off; but as for distinguishing between head or tail I could not. However, whilst I debated the bull was on his legs and out of sight in no time. I got one bullet after him, as he went,

but with what result I could not tell. We quickly got on his trail, and followed ; this was easy, as there was now a good deal of blood. We proceeded as before for about two hundred more yards, when my Mirri stopped and pointed. At that moment there was a tremendous snort and a crash, and the bull was back on him. He hopped round a tree-trunk as quick as a monkey and so dodged the bull, who then stood, for a moment broadside on to me, ten yards off. My first thought was for my kodak. My next, I must shoot him before he sees me ! This I did and dropped him where he stood.

#### YAK, TIBET ANTELOPE

The yak may be called the bison of Tibet. Like the rest of the tribe he stands higher at the shoulder than he does behind ; in fact, the hind-quarters may be called out of proportion.

His colour is black, becoming grizzled about the forehead with age ; he is a large beast, however, standing from 17 to 18 hands at the shoulder.

The habitat of the yak may be defined as the whole of Tibet, from the Kuenlun-lun range of E. Turkestan to the Himalayas on the south, at altitudes ranging from 12,000 feet on the northern to 13,000 feet on the southern portion of the area. Altitude with him is relative to latitude.

The yak if approached *up-wind*, for he has a marvellous nose, is an easy beast to shoot. His



"YAK" (*BOS GRUNNIENS*)—TIBET.



CENTRAL INDIAN PROVINCES—MIXED SPOILS.

sight and hearing are not very acute, especially when he is grazing. Old bulls, however, have a habit of taking up a position on a knoll in the middle of the day, when they are very difficult to approach.

In the early 'seventies, when the hill shooter was not so plentiful as he is nowadays, after having a good bag of ibex and bears in the Pangi valley, south of Kashmir, I conceived the idea of penetrating through Zanskar (a very little known region then), and going on through Ladak into Changchenmo, to try for yak and antelope. After some very hard marching I got to Leh about the middle of July, where I made arrangements for supplies and transport, and started off for Changchenmo, an elevated valley which once on a time was full of game—*Ovis hodgsoni*, bharal, antelope, and yak. I did not expect much, as it was late in the season, and two men had hunted there before me, one of whom I met on my way out from Leh.

He told me I might as well go back, as everything had been scared off. However I was not to be put off, and a day or two after crossed the Marsemik Pass (18,420 feet). On my way over I sighted a herd of ovis, but after a long chase had to give it up. I then dropped down into Changchenmo, a very open valley, through which ran a considerable stream, with here and there on the banks flats of green grass, the resort of the antelope. The slopes on each side of the valley were easy and bare, with tufts of coarse grass and burtza (wormwood) sparsely

scattered about. On ascending these slopes you come on fairly level, slightly undulating, plateaux covered with snow ; on this snow the yak retire and lie down in the heat of the day. Having struck the main valley at its junction with another called Kubrang, I camped for a day or two to try for an antelope. I found them morning and evening on the grass flats, but they were so wary from being hunted before that I could not get a shot. At last, however, I watched a herd off the flat into the side nullahs of the valley, made a good stalk, and got one.

The next day I forded the Changchenmo river and proceeded up the Kubrang, where I hoped to find yak. About fifteen miles up I camped on a beautiful flat of grass, and in the evening proceeded with my hunters up the valley. I soon came across the droppings of wild yak. There was no mistaking them for tame ones, for some of them were very large indeed. There is a native saying among the Bhots (people of this country), "The liver of a wild yak is a load for a tame one." I followed the trail of the herd, which led up to the plateau above for some way, but as night was coming on I returned to camp, expecting to find them down again and on the feed in the morning.

At an early hour I started off, and soon got to the flat where they had been before. They were, however, nowhere to be seen. Having carefully looked over the slopes, we proceeded up the valley, and on rounding a bend the next grass flat came in view. There they were right enough ; as far as I could



make out, three bulls and about a dozen cows—quite a big herd.

There was no getting at them on the flat ; I must needs wait until they had done feeding and moved up to the plateau above. I had not long to wait before they began to move, stringing out like baggage animals and moving up the spurs. As soon as the last disappeared over the sky-line off I went best pace, hoping to catch them over the crest, as my shikari had said there was a great deal of snow there. It was stiff work on that slope ; the gravelly, sandy soil was loose and yielding, and the altitude, 17,000 feet, made a difference to one's breathing. At last I cautiously peeped over. Oh, joy ! There they were, an easy shot ; nearest of all a great black bull, the long hair on his belly nearly sweeping the snow, waving his thick brush of a tail to and fro. I lay prone, not daring to put up my rifle until my pulse was quieter. I could hear my heart beat so loudly that I feared the yak would hear it also. At last I felt right, and raised my rifle. The beast was a splendid target on the white snow, and I only 100 yards from him ; it was therefore not surprising that I dropped him clean in his tracks. The rest of the herd ran together in a clump, just as musk oxen are said to do. This I did not like at all, for I could not distinguish bull from cow, they stood in such a clump. I made up my mind and picked out one which I judged to be a bull, although there were none as big as the first one I shot. The herd then made off, leaving one behind. He stood with his head

down. I walked towards him, and he still stood shaking his head now and again. I thought every moment he would charge, but he was evidently too sick to fight, and when I got close up to him I gave him two bullets, which settled him, and he subsided on the snow.





## CHAPTER XIV

### SLOTH BEAR

By Major C. S. CUMBERLAND

THIS beast is found all over tropical India, and sometimes as far north as the Ganges. He carries a very coarse, unkempt jacket, and is therefore not much use when bagged. He, however, is a good fighter, and many a native can show the marks of his claws on his scalp. If suddenly encountered, he is apt to get up and let out right and left. When wounded he is a perfect fiend, rushing about hither and thither, clawing and biting anything he comes against, yelling and roaring all the time.

Some years ago I found myself in camp near

Aboo, with the Commissioner and Sir Pertab Singh, the Prime Minister of Jhodpore, the most charming of companions, and one of the best sportsmen in India. He told me that a few miles from where we were camped there was a preserved jungle in which I was at liberty to shoot. But, he said, as no cattle were allowed in, it was so dense that I should probably see nothing, although I might hear a good deal moving about.

He gave me a Bheel as hunter, and off we went one morning before break of day. When I entered the jungle it was just light enough to see. The only thing to do was to follow one of the runs made by bears, and trust to luck. I took my double rifle in hand, and led the way. Away went a sounder of pigs, grunting and rushing through the high grass. But I did not war with these. Then a sambur would go off with a swish. The place was fairly alive with game of all sorts ; but as to shooting, it was the merest chance in the world. After going some distance we came to a sort of glade with grass, still pretty high, but more patchy, with rocks scattered about. Suddenly I caught sight of two black objects bundling away in the grass about a gun-shot from me. Judging them to be bears, I took a snap at one as at a vanishing rabbit. Then there arose an uproar as if some fiend had broken loose. I reloaded and stood still, wondering what would happen. I could not see, but judged from the sound that my bear, no doubt very sore behind, was cruising about looking for someone to pay out

for the injury done to his person. I waited for some time all ready, but he did not appear.

A bit of rock as high as a table stood about a hundred yards to my right, and, as I calculated, not far from where the bear lay, for I had not heard him move for a minute or so. I pointed it out to my Bheel, and told him to creep up to it, get on the top, and see if he could make out the bear from there ; if so, signal to me and I would follow. Off he went and crept up. As soon as he got there the bear evidently saw him, and started for the rock, yelling as loud as ever. Now I had induced my shikari to leave his gun at home, for I did not want him to loose off indiscriminately, as a Bheel will. I had perforce, therefore, to go to his defence. My only chance was to get on the rock before the bear got there. It was a race between us. Fortunately the bear had farther to go than I had. There was not much time for thought. I got one hand on the top of the rock, which turned out rather higher than I expected, but, hampered with my rifle in the other, I made a mull of it and slipped back. Down I went, fortunately on my feet, in front of the bear. I threw up my rifle, and pulled off right into his face. By the mercy of Providence I hit him fair on the forehead ; so close was he to the muzzle that the flash burnt his hair. He rolled against my shins, nearly upsetting me. My Bheel stood calmly on the top of the rock with his knife out, and did not seem a bit surprised at what had happened. He just slipped down from the rock and said quietly,

"He is dead." I took off his skin and went home, for the sun was getting warm, and there was, therefore, no chance of another shot until the evening.





SLOTH BEAR CUBS.



A GOOD MORNING'S WORK.





## CHAPTER XV

### TIGER

By MAJOR C. S. CUMBERLAND

AT the foot of the Himalayan range—roughly from Dehra in the Punjab down to Assoun—runs a belt of forest and swamp, for big game of all sorts one of the finest hunting-grounds of the world. Of course, like every other part of India, it is now not what it used to be in the days of the muzzle-loader. Tigers there are, and elephants, in considerable numbers; for as long as the jungle remains, the former, owing to the difficulty of hunting them in the dense forest and swamp regions that they frequent, will never be exterminated. Elephants, no doubt, would soon go, but as they are strictly pre-

served, they are increasing rather than diminishing in numbers. A certain number are taken yearly by the "Keddah" for domestication, and only what are called proscribed elephants, *i.e.* those who have gone rogue, and therefore dangerous and destructive, are allowed to be shot.

In the rainy season the tiger-grass, as it is called, grows into impenetrable masses in the swamps and open spaces of the jungle. This remains standing until the following spring, when it becomes dry enough to burn. About March or April, according to season, the annual burning begins. This is done by the inhabitants of the Terai to allow the young grass to grow for grazing purposes, and by sportsmen, so that when the said grass is burnt, patches only remain here and there, and can be beaten out by elephants. Before the grass is burned there is no chance of identifying game and bringing it to book.

The usual mode of hunting in the Terai is by working a line of twenty elephants or so through the covert. Men are useless for this purpose, as the grass stands eight or ten feet high, and it would be impossible to work a line properly, besides which, if a wounded tiger is about, a beater or two would certainly be killed.

The first thing to be done by a hunting party is to get "khubber" news of a tiger. For this purpose shikaris, who are excellent trackers, leave the camp at dawn and draw the most likely places until they come across the "pugs" or tracks of a tiger. It is their business to follow these tracks home—that is to

say, until they lead into some likely patch of jungle thick enough to hold a tiger when he lies up during the heat of the day. If by chance the hunters come across "a kill," *i.e.* generally a young tame buffalo which the tiger has killed and partly eaten during the night before, he is certain to lie up pretty near if he has not been disturbed. An experienced shikari will be able, by the nature of the jungle in the vicinity, to say pretty accurately where he lies. Having identified his beast he returns to camp, and when the sun is well up the line of elephants is taken out and the beat commences. The beat is composed of "howdah" riding elephants for the shooters and "pad" elephants for the beaters. On arrival on the ground to be beaten, the guns are placed by the leader. Some are sent forward to head the beat, the rest remain in the line, which is arranged with guns at intervals of the line, with pad elephants between them. Tigers vary much in their behaviour. Sometimes they lie close in the grass and almost allow elephants to tread on them, and sometimes they will go right ahead of the beat from its commencement.

There is something very solemn and impressive about a tiger-beat. There is a long line of black backs, the elephants moving at a funereal pace. Not a sound is heard but the swish of the grass as their huge carcasses brush along. At intervals down the line the sportsman stands up in his howdah, looking for all the world like a parson in a pulpit, except that he has a rifle in his hand instead of a sermon. Every one is on the tiptoe of expectation, including

the elephants, who know perfectly well what they are there for. Suddenly there is a low rumble like distant thunder, and a sort of metallic sound caused by one of the elephants striking his trunk against his knee. Every one is on the *qui vive*. A tiger is not far off; his scent has betrayed him. Some one points; a line of moving grass-tops is seen in front of the line. The leader, who is in the centre of the line, waves ahead. This is the order for the line to accelerate. Wang, wang go the "gazebars," a sort of boat-hooks with which the mahouts drive. Off the line goes after the moving grass. Nearer it comes and nearer, but still no stripes are to be seen—only the waving grass betrays the moving beast. The line gets near the end of the high grass; there is open jungle beyond where the forward guns are posted. Stripes is now on track unless he charges back through the line, and even then some one may get a chance at him on the way. He does not like to face the open; he stops a moment and comes back; you can just make him out through the grass. Bang goes a rifle. Probably it is a miss; you are very likely to shoot high off a howdah, especially in long grass. He bounds out of the grass right in front of one of the forward guns, who stands on his elephant motionless, in the shade if possible. A well-directed shot catches him fair, and over he goes. Or he may go on to lie up in a real thick place and take a deal of finishing, sometimes fighting and charging to the last, and sometimes dying like a cur, for tigers, like human beings, vary much in character.



THE RAJAH OF BALRAMPORE AND DEAD TIGERS.



DEAD TIGRESS.

In 1892 I got a letter from an old friend, a collector in the North-West Provinces, bidding me to a tiger-hunt on the banks of the Sarda. This was quite good enough, for besides knowing every inch of the district and being quite a good hunter and tracker himself, he had also command of unlimited elephants, being thoroughly popular in his own district. It was the end of March when we assembled on the banks of the Sarda river, which divides Nepal from the North-West Provinces. Every one was quite happy; the grass had dried early, and had been nicely burned in patches, and the shikari, who had been scouring the neighbourhood some days, reported several tigers in the vicinity.

The next morning, being fond of fresh air, I was up at daybreak, and sallied forth with my host and the two trackers to perform the first function of the day, *i.e.* to locate our tiger. We rode our pad elephants, which at this game take the place of covert hacks, and having proceeded about a mile from camp, we reached a deep-cut, winding nullah which had pools of water here and there in the bottom. Up this we proceeded, and soon came across what we wanted. A tiger, and a big one too, had taken a drink there during the night. After drinking he had left the nullah and crossed the open plain above, which extended half a mile wide along the edge. The ground was as hard as a road, and my host and his shikaris now showed me a wonderful bit of tracking. On this flat strip the tiger had wandered during the small hours. Here and there they hunted like dogs.

First one would take the trail up, then another. I could make nothing of it except where the ground became sandy and soft. For about two hours this went on, when the trail led us to a patch of high grass about half a mile long and varying in width, but convenient for our line of elephants. To make sure, the hunters were sent round to see if any tracks led away from the cover, and we then got on our pads and rode home to breakfast. Every one was keen for a start, so we soon disposed of our meal, and, mounting our pad elephants, which are more comfortable to ride on than howdahs, we set off to our ground. I and another gun were sent off to head the beat, whilst the line formed at the end of the grass jungle where the tiger had entered.

We took up our position at the far end where the patch finished with thin grass before it merged into the tree jungle. The cover narrowed there, and as the tiger would not face the open (the grass was burned on both sides) until he came quite to the end, we made sure of a good chance at him, if he were not shot by some one in the line before he reached us.

This wait is the worst part of a tiger-beat. You sit in your howdah with the sun burning fiercely on your back or on your face, flies of all sorts investigate you, get into your nose, eyes, and mouth. At first you are on tiptoe of expectation, but as the weary minutes go on you get stupid and drowsy. All of a sudden your elephant, who is one of the



most nervous, highly strung beasts in the world, gives a sudden start or hitch of his back. You are all ready in a moment, but it is nothing but a peacock, jungle-fowl, or porcupine, brushing by through the grass.

Things went on with us in this way for some time. We could make out the long line of black backs and howdahs about half way up the covert. As we looked there was a rifle shot at one end of the line. We watched what was to follow. There was no check—still a steady advance. Some one had had a shot and missed ; at all events, had not killed ; and stripes was coming on towards us. My sleepiness was passed ; I was now all awake. A tiger was doubtless coming on ahead of the beat. What is that line of waving grass coming straight towards me ? My rifle is ready cocked ; nearer and nearer it comes. Presently the thick grass parts right in front, and the head and chest of a splendid tiger appears. Curiously, for elephants are curious animals, my beast, although he had jumped when a jungle-fowl ran by, did not move a muscle. I raised my rifle and shot right down at the tiger as he came. Down he went on his nose, and I thought I had him stretched ; but no such luck—he was up again like a flash, and came on with an angry grunt or two. My elephant never moved. I gave him the other barrel as he came close up, and turned him off. I saw the blood patch of number two bullet on the near side of his back, and he went by me snarling. The line still came on steadily. I was quite happy,

and felt sure of my beast. Presently the beat was over. "What luck? What have you done?" said the skipper, as we called our leader. "Hit the tiger twice badly; he has gone on into the forest and won't go far." The shikari was called up, and I pointed to his trail. The hunter, after examining the ground for a bit, said, "Sahib, I can see no blood; I don't think he is hit." We all got off and looked about; there certainly was no blood on the trail, but as I had seen the mark of my Express bullet on his back as he went by me, I was confident, and angry at being told I had missed my tiger. I was hurt, horribly hurt. To miss a tiger in the open at 20 yards! I took the shikari by the arm, with my rifle in the other hand, and pulled him off with me to where I had seen the tiger enter the forest. "What are you going to do?" said the skipper. "Why, show this chap the blood trail, for I can swear to the tiger being hit twice." "Don't be a fool," he said; "if it is as you say, and you follow him far, he will have you as sure as eggs are eggs." "All right," I said, "when I have convinced Bahim Bux I will come back." It did not take long, for as we entered the thick bush jungle on the tiger's trail, "There," I said, pointing to blood on the leaves to the right and blood on the leaves to the left, "what does that mean?" "Sahib, forgive me; you are right." I rejoined our party jubilant. They had sat down to lunch. I was greeted with all sorts of chaff. "Never mind," I said, "the tiger is not far off, and we have got to kill him between us. He is mine, however,



*GOING THROUGH THE JUNGLE.*



*RETURNING WITH THE BAG.*

be it known," for I had got first blood. Whoever finished him, I claimed the skin.

Well, to make an end of this yarn, which is pretty much the same as any other tiger story, after having disposed of our lunch, we lined out the elephants to tread up our wounded beast. In a small glade, covered with high, thick grass, a pad elephant stumbled upon him where he lay. There was a fearful trumpeting of elephants, and coughing, which is more the word than roaring, of the tiger—such a jumble that no one got a chance. We got the pad elephants out of the thicket, and found that the poor pad that had walked on the tiger was badly mauled about the trunk. Then we six howdah people walked in, in close order, as it was only a small place. There was a dead tree lying in the middle, with grass growing through the bare branches. One of the guns caught sight of stripes ensconced in this. He was only about ten yards off, and he gave him a shot with a "Paradox" and turned him over. Then the usual chatter began. Bahim Bux, Koda Bux, and all the other buxes had to say how they did this, did that, and otherwise tiger would have got away, and so on.

I naturally was one of the first on the ground, and was trying to pull the tiger out of where he was trammelled by his great paw, when suddenly he gave a great sigh and stretched out his legs. I jumped back as if I was shot. I had my rifle ready in the other hand. It was his last gasp; he never moved again. It is funny how often one does a thing which

one knows to be wrong in the excitement of the moment, and many a man has lost his life when hunting dangerous game, walking up to what he takes for a dead beast, which is really only stunned.





## CHAPTER XVI

### BIG GAME SHOOTING IN BURMAH

By E. D. CUMING

IF a few notes on my cold weather jungle trips in Lower Burmah can be of any use the public is very welcome to them, but I stipulate for leave to warn my readers that they are not hearing the voice of authority. When a man has been shooting big game for years in all quarters of the globe, and can furnish the walls of his house from hall to roof with his own trophies, he has something to say worth the telling. All I can do is to try to show what any man with a short purse who goes out alone with Burmese and Karen shikaries may expect if he be prepared to rough it and work hard ; and he must do both if he

puts himself unreservedly into the hands of a moderately keen Karen, whose walking powers I often found reason to think might be modified with advantage.

#### SAMBHUR, BROW-ANTLERED, AND BARKING DEER

A following of a dozen or eighteen men is enough for such little expeditions as I used to make, unless it is intended to beat and do nothing else, when the number may be doubled. The Burmese are particularly careful to refrain from needless exertion, and perhaps this explains the merit of their method of beating: they stroll through the jungle tapping the trees with their sticks, and seldom throw their tongues unless excited by putting up game at close quarters. In consequence, the animals moved are not frightened, and advance without unduly hurrying themselves. If you leave the direction of affairs to your Karen shikari he generally chooses the area to be beaten with a good deal of skill, for which the nature of Burmese virgin jungle affords plenty of scope. A favourite system is to try to drive game across some open glade; and, unwilling as game of all species are to face the open, the beaters manage to force them to it with great success, affording the quick shot as good a chance as he has any right to expect. The *gyee*, barking deer, and *thamin*, brow-antlered deer, are the beasts most commonly brought to light by this method of beating. They lie up in the jungle during the day,



probably within a short distance of the patch of grass whereon they browse at night. If the fates are very kind you may get a shot at sambhur, or at wild cattle (*tsaing*), which latter are comparatively rare. The day on which a *tsaing* is bagged is one to mark with a white stone.

The great obstacle to doing justice to one's opportunities under these conditions is the presence of a tiny winged insect called, rightly or wrongly, the "bamboo fly." These creatures swarm in the bamboo jungle, and seem to hold it their bounden duty to get into your eye at the moment game breaks. It may be possible to hold straight at a galloping deer while shedding floods of fly-brought tears, but I never managed to accomplish the feat myself. The best thing to do is, Keep your cheroot going till the last moment, as the flies will not face the smoke.

The flattering faith the native has in a white man's skill with the rifle is apt to lead your shikari into asking too much. Only by dint of misses did I convince one disappointed man that it was useless to drive game out of dense jungle across a six-foot track into dense jungle to be shot at a hundred yards range, or less, in the act of jumping the path. Any driven beast crosses any open space with a leap or at speed, and to drop him with a snap-shot crossing a six-foot ride needs a marksman Dr. Carver himself might respect. It may be worth reminding the inexperienced hand that if a beast can choose (and the gentle Burmese mode of beating allows him

choice) he will select the narrowest part of an open space for his crossing. This was demonstrated in a convincing way by a leopard one morning. He had been tracked into a triangular patch of heavy grass jungle at the junction of two paths, both of very irregular width, and I took my stand behind a bush to command the two. The men had come so close that I had concluded the leopard must have slipped quietly back through the line, when there was a stealthy momentary rustle at the edge of the grass, and a spotted body shot across the path within six feet of my bush. That I, warned by the quivering grass tops, got in my shot and wounded the beast as he flashed over the path, is a detail to be regretted by myself as well as the leopard. We saw no more of him, and I listened with all humility to the shikari while he pointed out that, inasmuch as the undergrowth bellied out to within arm's length of the grass at that spot, it was exactly the place where the leopard might be expected to cross if he crossed at all, since nowhere else did the jungle come within seven paces of the cover out of which he had been driven. A leopard does not throw away chances under these circumstances; he makes his way with extraordinarily little noise or disturbance through the densest cover until the last moment. Then lightning speed replaces deliberation. I had nearly written "replaces caution," but the animal's natural shrewdness never deserts him while he has a whole skin on his body.

The fact that you never know what is going

to turn up in a beat on the hills and the adjacent lands lends the business peculiar, but withal baffling, attractions; this is particularly the case near the areas of *toungya* cultivation—those clearings strewn with tree trunks and limbs felled by fire in the wasteful process of preparing land for cultivation practised by the Karens. Game is almost always to be found in the jungle surrounding these clearings, and the cultivator is always only too pleased to give your party any help he can. Perhaps he shows you last night's slots of a sambhur which has defied his best efforts of fence-building; the shikari compares notes with him, chooses the ground to beat, posts you behind a recumbent tree-trunk, and leads the beaters into the jungle. You make yourself comfortable, and study the probable field of fire, "visualising" a sambhur as your objective—at least I always did so on the strength of the slots; and when, instead of the expected sambhur, an elderly, active pig turns up, dodging among tree-stumps and bushes, the apparition is a little apt to put you off your shot. And here it may be well to say that if you are camping near or mean to shoot in the neighbourhood, you will do wisely to try and drop that undesired pig. Pigs are among the most mischievous foes of the Karen farmer, and he will assuredly reckon its death to you for merit, and think nothing of making a day's journey to bring you news of game in requital. Moreover, your men will eat as much pig as they can hold, and be all the keener to work for you after it. Buddhist law forbids the Burman to take life,

but preserves an indulgent reticence concerning the consumption of meat.

With a tolerably wide acquaintance among books on sport, it has often struck me that the writers seldom, if ever, insist sufficiently on one feature of jungle shooting to which the beginner's attention might profitably be drawn. Possibly the omission is due to the fact that (unlike the present scribe) the writers do not attempt to write their experiences until they have left the days of their 'prenticeship so far behind that the more subtle difficulties have been forgotten; but the fact remains that they do not warn the beginner of the curious difficulty of seeing game, even when on the move, in the jungle. There is something ghost-like and impalpable about even so big a beast as a sambhur in the chequered gloom of the covert, and the uneducated eye refuses to accept it. It is likely that a goodly proportion of unrecorded early misses are to be attributed to the wonderful fashion in which the colour of the deer harmonises with its surroundings. This being so, the new hand cannot begin his apprenticeship to the jungles more profitably than by "calling," or more accurately by letting his shikari call, while he sits by, stock still, with ears and eyes open. Many Burmans, otherwise not very capable as shikaries, are wonderfully successful callers; it is a pursuit that appeals to the Burman, inasmuch as he has only got to sit still and produce weird noises with a leaf between his lips,—a form of exercise which in Burmese esteem compares favourably with walking. Calling



*A FINE SAMBUR STAG.*



is not the most sporting form of sport ; indeed, I venture to doubt whether it is entitled to rank as a legitimate method of killing at all, but it is far and away the best education for eyes and ears that ingenuity can devise. The man with true sporting instincts will suggest that it is quite possible to call deer and refrain from shooting. I agree ; but there is the shikari to consider, and should his patron suggest leaving his rifle in camp, the practically-minded shikari will respectfully intimate his intention to stay with it. In the circumstances, the beginner may compromise between the shikari's prejudice and his own sporting conscience—take his rifle with him, and be careful not to shoot straight.

Crouched in a carefully-chosen nook among bushes, where the jungle is fairly open, the shikari produces at intervals the squeaking whistle which the buck gyee mistakes for the love-call of a doe. If the evening be still—it is essentially a late afternoon pursuit—you will hear the buck long before you see him, and the patter of hoofs on the asphalte-like earth will tell you where to look. Once he comes within view the greatest caution in movement is necessary ; it is assumed that only the upper part of your head is exposed, and when you must move your head to follow his movements do it as slowly as you can. A deer's eyes are so placed that he can see all round his head, practically speaking, and the slightest abrupt movement will arrest his attention at once. When the buck is in sight and looking about for the imaginary doe whose summons he has obeyed, it is a

useful exercise to shut your eyes for a few seconds and "pick him up" again—an easy thing enough if he be on the move, or moving any part of his anatomy, but surprisingly difficult if he has changed his position a little, and stands still again against a new background, or amid a different arrangement of light and shade. Perhaps it is unnecessary to remark that any wild animal when it suspects the presence of a foe stands perfectly still.

Sambhur, thamin, and barking deer are alike in one respect—they leave the safe seclusion of the jungle at night to feed along the margins of the grassy glades, and where not disturbed have regularly-used drinking-places. I have a vivid recollection of one such drinking-place in a nameless spot on an upper reach of the Salween. It was a pool left by the monsoon floods in the sand under an amphitheatre of heavily-wooded hills, and the shallow beach margin nearest the jungle was trodden by sambhur, like a farm-yard by cattle; some of the slots were so large that the Karens with one consent fell to measuring them with their fingers and making comparative estimates of the owners' size. Those comparative estimates, by the way, were all we were able to make. On moonlight nights such watering-places are much affected by Karen shikaries, who kill solely for meat. It is not a legitimate form of sport, but has lasting fascinations for anyone who enjoys studying "wild life at home"; and I recall without the least regret opportunities foregone for the sake of watching the proceedings of a band of sambhur.



The sambhur, like the elephant and bison, is much addicted to wallowing in a mud bath of his own making ; he resorts thither at night to enjoy himself with, apparently, a certain degree of regularity. If, in discussing matters with a Karen, you mention sambhur among the game of your desire, you may lay odds on his saying he can show the way to a *saht-lo*, or sambhur wallow. But, obviously, sitting over a *lo* is not a fairer mode of getting a shot than sitting over a drinking-place.

The cervine habit of coming out into the open to feed affords chances of a shot which cannot be wholly recommended, unless your men have the dogs which are used for coursing deer in some parts of the Tenasserim Division (the coast districts below Tavoy occur to mind as a region where they cultivate this very legitimate form of sport). The light up to the very brink of the dawn is so uncertain that you are more likely to wound than kill, and in such case the odds are great in favour of the quarry making good his escape into covert unless you have dogs to slip after him.

In the open park-like lands by far the best sport with thamin is to be had by stalking. It is necessary to be on the ground before dawn, when the deer are still feeding in the open ; then you may find the stags alone or, on occasion, with a small band of hinds. The patches and clumps of jungle which generally occur on these park-lands favour stalking, and enable you to come within range of a deer which, in too many parts of the province, has

become exceptionally shy and wary through much persecution.

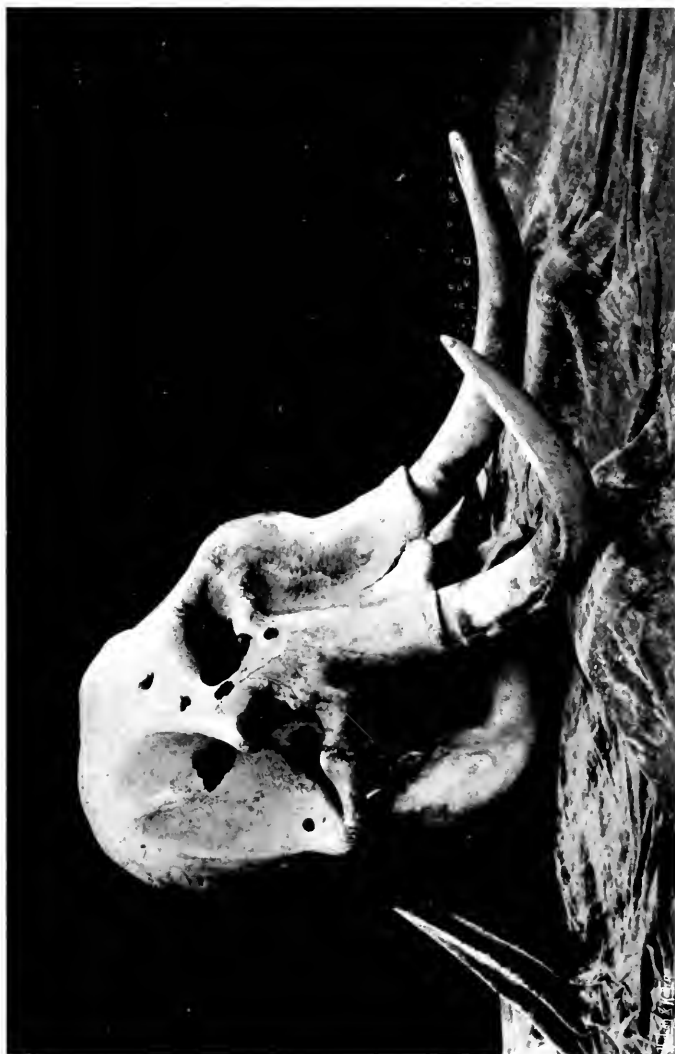
The Burman, unhandicapped by codes of sportsmanship, turns his knowledge of deer life-habit to account on dark, moonless nights with an adaptation of the system approved by pot-hunters in many other parts of the world. Equipped with an extinguisher-shaped basket, mud-plastered within to prevent its catching fire, which he carries on his head, mouth forward to display the light flaming inside, he prowls along the edge of the grazing grounds with a friend who is armed with a dah; sometimes a bullock's neck-bell is used to enhance the fascinating influence of the *mee toung*, or fire basket, but the latter, as far as my experience goes, answers all practical purposes by itself. As this is a contribution to a sporting work, no more need be said about the *mee toung* business, save to add that it is worth seeing as a curiosity.

### BISON

The Karen either quests over likely ground for the bison's spoor, and follows it up, or—which is by far the more satisfactory method—tracks him from his feeding-ground at dawn; on occasion, too, he sits over the mud wallow to be found in some secluded nook in the hillside; it is not advisable for the man with nostrils at all sensitive to share a vigil near one of these places, apart from other objections.



A SHOOTING CAMP.



HEAD OF INDIAN ELEPHANT.

The daily programme of bison in the cold weather, such as it is in Lower Burmah, seems to be pretty much the same ; and the laudable regularity of the solitary bull's habits enables you at all events to come within range of him, exercising any ordinary care. Wind serving, the shikari may lead you within a few yards of a bull in fairly thick jungle. The first shot I ever had at a bison was through a bush which intervened between the beast and myself when we were some ten or twelve paces apart. I could see his fore-legs, and with the misguided experimental ardour of a green hand let him have it through the bush, firing where I thought his shoulder should be ; but the honest tale of early blunders is long, and space is short.

The bison, when left undisturbed, drowzes away the best part of the day in the jungle, displaying, so far as my experience goes, decided preference for high ground, perhaps because the hill-tops are cooler than the valleys. At dusk he pulls himself together and starts feeding, wallowing and otherwise enjoying himself ; and if there be within reasonable distance of his dormitory low swampy ground where the kyaing grass flourishes, he is sure to pay it a visit. He has generally finished eating by daybreak, and the first gleam of dawn sees him plodding up the hill to go back to bed, chew the cud, and sleep. It is his well-known weakness for the thick, juicy stems of the kyaing grass that furnishes the key to your proceedings.

The best plan is to pitch the camp a mile or

two away from the swamp, and time your departure so as to reach the feeding-ground about dawn ; and as the dewfall at night in the cold season is exceedingly heavy (you may be pardoned if on waking you mistake the clatter and drip on the leaves for heavy rain) a mackintosh is essential for a walk through the jungles until an hour or two after sunrise. The shikari's first care on reaching the swamp is to ascertain whether any late feeder remains. I never saw one myself, but from the circumspection exercised by the man of experience, it is evidently a precaution to be observed. The coast being clear, resign yourself to the leeches and follow the Karen. If a bison has been there during the night the fresh-bitten stems of kyaing grass, an inch in diameter, will betray him at once ; the severed stems oxidise quickly, and those which show a tinge of brown were bitten hours ago ; those severed this morning are fresh and juicy. If the ground is water-logged the lie of the stems—6 feet long or more—shows the way by which the bison left the feeding-ground ; he lumbers along, picking a stem here and there as he goes, pressing the bamboo-like growth aside. This track, however, is so obvious that the totally unexperienced man detects it for himself. Having found the way of exit from the swamp and dragged yourself out of it, pick off as many leeches as can be induced to part with you, taking their heads with them (do not attempt to pull off by force any which have driven their mandibles well into your skin, or you will suffer for it), and take up the spoor.

In country which is seldom disturbed, and where the undergrowth is thick, the spoor probably leads up a well-defined game-path, but the Karen will keep an eye on the tracks, and should he sight the bison unexpectedly, caution in taking the shot, which is pretty sure to be at close quarters in these dense jungles, is very necessary. A tree behind which you can reload or change weapons is a harbour of refuge much to be desired in dealing with bison under these conditions, for there is a larger element of luck in this business than in most forms of sport: you *may* kill or disable with your first two barrels, but as a clear shot is almost impossible to obtain without betraying your presence *take the first decent chance you can get*. A bison startled by the sudden appearance of man at close quarters may take the offensive, and you cannot afford to waive any advantage. If, before he sees or winds you, you can fire and wound him, the report or the pain, or both, seem to make him lose his head. A bull, hit in the neck before he saw me, plunged forward, wheeled round, and, dashing across the sandy path whence I had fired, pulled up abruptly on the farther side of a clump of bushes, and stood there snorting and blowing. In crossing the path he passed within three or four paces, and his rush actually stirred the hanging wisps of smoke. Reloading with as little noise as possible, I stole round the bushes, over which the ridge of his black back was just visible, and saw him standing with outstretched muzzle looking sharply from side to side as he snuffed the air. As he was tail on, I

drew back unseen on to the sandy path to try for a better position, but before I had taken a dozen steps he circled round once or twice at a slow trot and then started off best pace up the hill. Close as we (self and three Karens) were, he had not detected us, and my firm belief, confirmed by other interviews, is that he was dazed by the report of the rifle so close to him ; there is good reason to think also that the sight of this beast is neither keen nor quick.

After a stern chase of four hours, during which the blood tracks, at first highly encouraging, gradually ceased altogether, we had to give him up. It was typical of Karen theories, that the shikari (whose discretion had taken him behind a big tree the moment he had pointed out the beast) should have expressed his sorrow that I did not break a hind leg of the beast when I had the second chance ; for "he could not then run fast, and your honour would certainly have killed him with more shots after a very little walking."

An acquaintance who encountered a bison under very similar circumstances had sad reason to remember it ; the beast saw or winded the party, charged without waiting to be attacked, and killed the Karen shikari on the spot. If the spoor leads you to the hill crests where the bison drowzes away the hot hours of the day, you may have a much better chance, but it depends entirely on the nature of the spot he chooses for his siesta. The best one I ever lost was when my Karen sighted our quarry from fully 50 yards distance lying down under a bamboo clump to chew the cud ; holding fire to try and get



a clearer shot, an untimely puff of wind, the first of the breeze that follows sunrise, betrayed us, and the terrific crashing of bamboos as the bison ploughed his way through them furnished a needful lesson in wisdom of taking the first chance.

Sport more likely to produce trophies and less trying to the nerves can be obtained by using an elephant. Bison appear not to notice the presence of men on elephant back, and it would seem as though the scent of the elephant, which the bison accepts as that of a friend, smothered that of man. The great advantage offered by the elephant is the vastly better chance of getting a clear shot, but you must set against this the circumstance that shooting from a pad is very like shooting from a boat on a calm but ever-moving sea. The staunchest elephant does not provide absolute safety. I have in mind the adventure of a friend who discovered this to his cost ; he wounded a bison, which instantly charged his elephant and knocked her clean over, giving the rider a fall which brought about a serious illness.

### ELEPHANTS

The law has thrown a kindly protecting arm about the elephant, and there is (unless some change has recently been made) a fine of Rs.500 for shooting an elephant of good character, or at all events one against whose character nothing is known. The Burmese and Karen cultivators in some parts opine

that there are too many elephants, and it must be admitted that they do an enormous amount of damage in the paddy fields once they find their way thither. In 1886 a herd of twenty or twenty-five committed such depredations in a district of Irrawaddy Division that an official invitation was sent to the superintendent of kheddah operations, then in the Garrow Hills, to come down and catch them. That officer declined, on the ground that there were more elephants than he could deal with in the region receiving his attention at the time ; but he offered the services of a party armed with four-bores, which, if I remember rightly, were not accepted. The incident may help to allay the anxiety of those who derive a melancholy satisfaction from the compilation of figures to demonstrate the limitations of the elephant as a living species. In Burmah, at any rate, there is no danger of his early extinction.

I have never shot an elephant—not from want of opportunity, nor from respect of the law (or fear of being fined, which amounts to the same thing), but because the animal at home failed to inspire me with the thirst for blood which drags one out of bed at four o'clock on a dark morning, to trudge miles along rough and thorny tracks through a continual shower bath for the chance of a shot at bison. It did not seem worth killing a beast so big for so commonplace a trophy as a pair of average tusks, whose merits would be estimated by their market value in depreciated rupees. What one's views might have been within range of a tusker with six-foot

ivories I cannot say ; it is possible that the sight would have induced a change of opinion.

I enjoyed at one time the confidence of a village headman, who for the modest stipend of Rs.8 per mensem represented the Imperial Government in a certain creek village on the Ngawoon river. He was fond of a jungle trip, spoke a little Karen, and was of obliging disposition ; the paddy lands behind his village spread to the foot-hills of the range that lies between the river and the Bay of Bengal, and the crops suffered a good deal from pigs, sambhur and other deer, and, the headman said, from elephants. I never quite gathered whether his professed hostility to elephants was due to a belief that no self-respecting white man could die happy unless he could say he had killed an elephant, or to the circumstance that "elephant is the very best meat" ; but the fact remains that he would of his own initiative stand over the spoor of an elephant wherever found and lightly condemn the owner as the big-bellied thief who had eaten acres and acres of poor men's paddy last week, the week before, last month, any time that sounded plausible—to the end that I, his privileged friend, might kill and destroy with a clear conscience and a pocket immune from the law. He was a helpful man : there are plenty like him.

You may "happen on" elephants anywhere in the forest-clad range of which I have been writing,—between the Ngawoon river and the sea,—and, shy as they are, you can approach them very closely on a still day. If they are resting, leaning against trees,

as their habit is, the recurrence of intestinal rumblings betrays their whereabouts. In the bamboo jungles, whither they appear to resort at any and every hour of the twenty-four to browse, the disturbance among the feathery bamboo crowns caused by busy trunk tips shows you where they are if you do not first hear the thrash, thrash, as they break the thicker bamboos against their knees. The trunk writhing and playing among the concealing bamboo foliage is oddly suggestive of a monkey's gambols : long after I ought to have known better I mistook one for the other. Needless to say, the big beasts themselves are completely hidden by the thick cane brake, and you must creep very close indeed to see them. Given a favourable wind and a pair of tennis shoes, you can do this, but it is throwing more responsibility on your guardian angel than that officer should be asked to sustain, as the elephants, if they fail to locate the enemy as they wind him, rush hither and thither, smashing their way through the bamboos like dogs through corn, and the adventurous sportsman is more liable to be run down by accident than to get a shot at all likely to kill.

I am rather of the opinion that to take up and follow on foot the freshest elephant spoor is not worth the trouble. You may follow the beast for hours together, encouraged by occasional glimpses of his hind-quarters, often, it may be, within fifty yards ; and he may consider it desirable to stop and rest for a while, but the chances of getting round him through the heavy jungle and creeping near enough to put in



*FEMALE ELEPHANT AND YOUNG.*



BURMESE ELEPHANTS.

a shot without being detected by him are slight. If riding an elephant, you can, of course, take liberties.

In the more open jungle it is, of course, a different matter. Elephants appear to spend their leisure time in the heat of the day drowsing in the shade and leaning against trees. In forest where the undergrowth affords cover without being too dense, I have crept within thirty or forty yards of them many times.

One of the most charming jungle sights I ever saw was late one afternoon up in these hills. We had chosen the camping-place for the night in a *choung*,—one of the half-dry sandy watercourses which intersect the hills in all directions, legacies of the south-west monsoon and its torrential rains,—and with one Karen I was strolling along another of these courses some distance from the camp, hoping to pick up a couple of pigeons, a jungle fowl, or whatever might offer itself as a change from venison. The Karen, who was a pace or two in front seeking a path among a mass of boulders, at a bend in the *choung* suddenly collapsed, and shrank as deftly as a land crab into a convenient crevice, imploring caution with both hands. Sixty or seventy yards away, on the margin of the still water, stood a cow elephant with a calf ten hands high at most : she had clearly brought her baby for an evening tub, and he would not “get in.” What little wind there was blew from the elephants, so I knelt down and watched the pair.

The old elephant began by taking a step or two into the shallow, drew up water and gave herself a shower-bath ; a fair sprinkling went over the

youngster, who shook his ears ; she took no notice of him till she had given her head another couple of douches, when she backed slowly out of the water, and he plunged at her to suckle. She pushed him away and passed her trunk over his back ; this he seemed to regard as an objectionable order to get into his tub, for he began to scream as shrilly as a pig, and spun round, turning tail on the water. Then his mother took sand in her trunk and blew it over herself and him ; he enjoyed this particularly when the sand blast was applied to his belly. Having apparently got him into a good temper, she took a step slowly towards the water, her trunk lying over his shoulders ; he had been turning about under the soothing sand blast and was facing the water again. The moment his mother moved waterwards he burst out into a squeal, and the indulgent parent stopped. Then something seemed to alarm her ; she took her trunk off her child, threw out her ears, and her tail stopped swinging. There must have been a foe near, for after standing fully ten or fifteen seconds with the calf close under her flank, she wheeled round sharply towards our hiding-place, walked up the sand and disappeared into the jungle. It seemed as though the squeals of the calf had attracted a tiger.

#### TIGER AND LEOPARD

I remember being told when I first arrived in the country that "there are no tigers in Burmah." The statement, to put it mildly, was incorrect. There



are any number of tigers, but the wealth of game in the jungles probably explains why the village herdsman sees so little of them. Every jungle herdsman who lives in the open park-like lands, and pens his buffaloes or cattle in a kraal near his dwelling at night, knows of a tiger,—which in nineteen cases out of twenty is a leopard,—and will cheerfully accept a rupee or two for a buffalo calf to be tied up. It is unsatisfactory work sitting over the chosen victim under these circumstances, as the leopard with almost human perversity prefers to visit the pen and make his own selection. A Karen's pig-sty is a ready-made bait, and a very good one; the leopard's preference for pork over other meat is marked. If you want tiger you had better go up into the hills: these are meshed all over with *choungs*, which very commonly take the shape of wide sand strips, along one or both sides of which, under the jungle, the remains of the monsoon floods linger far into the hot season. The tigers cross these sand strips to get from cover to cover, and, where left undisturbed, the beast frequently follows the same beat night after night with the regularity of a London policeman. The pugs, nearly obliterated by drift, and so fresh that the claw-tips stand out sharply, show that the same line has been followed perhaps for weeks. Hit off such a path meandering across a *choung* and follow it into the jungle, out along or across another *choung*, into cover again, and so on, and you will obtain as good an idea of the tiger's method of hunting as if he had taken you with him. The

water in these rain-made courses usually lies under the shadow of the trees between a gently shelving beach and a naked earth-cliff, any height from three feet to thirty, clothed as to its overhanging crest with grass and underwood. When a track enters the jungle (the tiger jumps the water if narrow, but wades or swims if he must) you may be tolerably sure it will roughly skirt the crest of the overhanging bank (unless it be too high or the water below too wide for a spring to the farther side where deer and other creatures come to drink). The tiger, no doubt, prowls along these tracks with an eye to anything that may come to the water.

His tastes appear to be catholic. On one occasion we picked up the headless body of a monkey ; it was quite warm, blood still flowing from the severed neck. Clearly we had disturbed a tiger in the very act of catching his unworthy prey, for examinations of the ground showed just what had happened : ten or a dozen light tracks in the sand radiating from one spot by the water indicated how the survivors had scattered in flight ; a little disturbance of the sand at that spot with incriminating pugs showed where the tiger had alighted in his leap from cover across the water ; two more and deeper pugs showed where he took off in his return jump ; and a step or two inside the jungle was the dead monkey in a pool of blood. The tiger had bitten the head off as he heard us coming and had bolted. I sat over the mortal remains of that monkey from the moment we found it—about half-past five—for four hours, but

the tiger evidently did not consider them worth coming back for ; and my Burmans ate them next day.

When one comes across one of these regular tiger paths, the plan is to follow it on the heel line to a suitable place, and watch from a tree or convenient rock ; arranging, if your rock is accessible, so that you may get your shot after the tiger has passed and is no longer facing you. When hit he is sure to spring forward, and if hit while approaching, the spring will be at you. Speaking for myself, that green glare of a tiger's eyes at close quarters in uncertain moonlight has a distinctly unsettling effect on the nerves : one can hold steadier when he is not looking. Needless to say, there is no certainty of getting a shot by adopting this method : in country where game is so plentiful you may watch night after night without seeing the beast. The cold weather is the season that affords the best chance, as all beasts of prey are hungrier and more alert in cold nights than in the hot weather.

Tigers appear to suffer from curiosity : many a time when camping in a *choung* (to escape the heavy dew-drip in the early morning), I have been wakened by the eager voices of the men, who have seen, heard, or smelled a tiger close by. On occasion the visitor will prowl all round the camp without uttering a sound, and, of course, showing himself as little as possible.

[There is an intention of bringing all the game laws, applicable to the different parts of India, into a

comprehensive code that shall have some semblance of uniformity. It was hoped that this would be done before these volumes went to press, and that it would be possible to incorporate the code with them. Delays, however, have been so many that the code is not yet published.—ED.]



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